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A PARSON'S DEFENCE

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BY

S. C. CARPENTER, M.A.

WARDEN OF THE GONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE MISSION AND SETTLEMENT IN BATTERSEA

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"To assert positively that everything is as I have described, is not the part of a sensible man. But that this, or something like this, is the destiny of our immortal souls, appears to me a reasonable belief,—a belief on which one may fairly rest his hopes."

PLATO, *Phaedo*, 145
(*Whewell's Paraphrase*)

"For my religion . . . I dare without usurpation assume the honourable style of a Christian. . . . To difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle; there is no Church whose every part so squares unto my conscience, whose articles, constitutions, and customs, seem so consonant unto reason, and, as it were, framed to my particular devotion, as this whereof I hold my belief—the Church of England; to whose faith I am a sworn subject, and therefore, in a double obligation, subscribe unto her articles, and endeavour to observe her constitutions: whatsoever is beyond, as points indifferent, I observe, according to the rules of my private reason, or the humour and fashion of my devotion. . . . I honour my own profession."

SIR THOMAS BROWNE,
Religio Medici

PREFACE

THE laity have had a capital innings and have put together a considerable score. It is notorious that batting is the strong point of amateurs. The time has come now for the professionals to go in again. But, unhappily, the wicket has become rather sticky. A great deal of rain has fallen since yesterday, and the hot sun this morning beating on the softened pitch has produced a condition of affairs that will call out all our powers. The bowling is good; uneven, at times brilliant, though not consistent; and the individual fielding and catching are first-rate.

What does all this mean? It means that there is, among lay members of the Church of England, a large measure of discontent with the traditional presentation of the Christian religion. This discontent has been expressed with sympathy and spirit in a number of recent books.

The situation is delicate and difficult. The showers of rain symbolize the descent of the scientific spirit upon English religion. In the long run it improves the condition of the field of controversy. It makes the grass green and the levels true. But at first it is embarrassing; and when it is suddenly followed by the hot sun of a new psychology and a revived interest in religion, it is a trial indeed.

In a team of cricketers, especially professionals, the steadiest bats are always sent in first. They bear the brunt of the attack and break the bowling. But sometimes towards the tail there arrives a batsman whose reckless hitting pleases the spectators and adds a few runs to the score. It would never have done to send him in first. But at times such an one is more picturesque and in his way not less useful than the more orthodox defenders. It is my hope in this volume to hit a boundary or two before I am caught or stumped.

The theological unrest is certainly widespread. What have the clergy been doing to compose it? Some hundreds of sermons have been published by them, and some millions have been preached. But sermons are meant to edify the flock. Those of them (if any) which at all resemble the present volume are not always read or heard by the complainants. So here is an attempt to put the clerical position, to express the creed of Christendom from the parson's point of view. It is a plea for what some will call superstition. I call it the more adventurous exercise of a God-given faculty and a theological virtue, faith.

This book may perhaps be read by the clergy. They are great readers of what is not meant for them, and it is often feared that the Evidential pamphlets addressed to working-men are seen only by candidates for ordination. It may be that clerical readers will be interested to find that some one has taken the trouble to put on paper thoughts which many of them have had constantly in their minds. But it is intended to be read by laymen.

It is intended to conciliate all reasonable laymen. If I have anywhere wounded the susceptibilities of older and better men than myself, I ask for their forgiveness. It has not been wanton.

I do not for a moment deny that very much of what I have here said could be said by laymen as well as by the clergy. Much of the book is simply a statement of the Christian religion. I have tried to explain part of our holy faith, and I naturally begin from my own professional point of view. That is all. It is not a blast of defiance. I am not attacking the laity, though perhaps their own conscience will supply a criticism here and there. But laymen do not always understand the emphasis with which we state the creed, and in some respects the lay point of view is necessarily different from our own. We are free, I hope, from the morbid complacence of imaginary martyrdom. We do not hug ourselves in absurd ecstasy at being misunderstood. But explanations are often useful, and it has seemed worth while to try to define, for all who may be interested, the clerical standpoint, to express the opinion of a humble member of the priesthood on the necessary place of that body in the divine economy of Christendom; and it will be enough reward for the labour of writing and the violation of some natural instincts of reserve if a few non-clerical readers are led to give the clergy their due.

In the chapters which follow the point of view is not marked with equal definiteness all the time. In the first chapter it is perhaps unduly insistent: in others it hardly appears at all. The reason of this is partly that the first chapter is the first chapter, and

partly that whenever a minister of Christ is trying to write about his Master a certain passion of possession, not felt at other times, descends upon his faltering words. He makes no contrasts, and claims no exclusive rights, but *consilium dat tamquam misericordiam consecutus a Domino ut sit fidelis.*

The order of the chapters is part of a deep design. The book begins with Christ because it is meant to be a Christian book. It ends with three chapters on what may be thought trivial and parochial matters, because a parish is the practical province of Christ's work, and is also the healthiest and largest-minded kind of province in the world.

Further, one great reason for writing this book is that so many novels are written about the clergy. If the novels were true, the book might well have died unborn. But unfortunately they are generally quite untrue. In the first place the writers do not know their facts. Their descriptions of what happens in the Church are incorrect. But there is a more serious fault than this. Not only have the writers of these books never been to church: they have never even met any clergymen. They do not know their clerical psychology. Their books are certainly an illustration of how it is possible for people to regard priests. But they are quite ignorant of how it is usual for priests to regard people. I daresay it is a difficult subject, because although we ourselves are a simple and ingenuous race of men, our experience is complex and intricate. Perhaps, it is too much to expect the ladies who write these books to understand it all. But if so, the remedy is surely obvious.

All trades have their journalism, and some have their literature. I do not claim that this book is literature, but at any rate it is an attempt to describe a thing which finds many enemies, and some unintelligent and injudicious friends. It is an essay on the principles of priestcraft.

Parts of the book, amounting only to about twenty pages, have appeared in various periodicals. I have to acknowledge the courtesy of Messrs. G. J. Palmer and Sons, in allowing me to reprint an article and some verses from the *Church Times*, of Canon Scott Holland and Mr. Edghill for permission to use parts of three articles from *Commonwealth*, and a few pages from *London Bridge*. Also, by the courtesy of the Syndics of the Pitt Press, I am able to reprint a few sentences from the introduction to a little commentary of mine on the Epistles to the Corinthians.

To my brother-in-law, the Reverend A. S. Duncan Jones, Fellow and Dean of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, I owe a great number of helpful suggestions, a few of them being criticisms *ad hoc*, but the more part memories of a twelve-years' companionship. My general indebtedness to such teachers as Bishop Westcott, the Bishop of Oxford, and Canon Scott Holland hardly admits of detailed acknowledgment, and will be apparent to all who know their work. But I cannot refrain from making a special reference to the Reverend V. S. S. Coles. He has only seen a few pages of my book, but I am one of very many whom he has helped to see that faith is a gift, and that the religion of Christians is Christ.

No one but myself can be held responsible for the opinions here expressed. And I make no apologies for them. I believe them to be agreeable to the Word of God and to the teaching of the Church. They are founded on an experience which has been not long, but full and varied. But it is perhaps legitimate to mention that they have been expressed in the spare moments of a busy life.

Finally, it seems worth while to attempt some explanation of two omissions, which to some readers will seem very glaring. I have nowhere expressed my views either on the results of modern New Testament criticism or on the exact amount of truth contained in the teaching of Schweitzer and the extreme school of "eschatologists." The reason in the first case is that no judgments of the kind can at present be other than provisional, and that even provisional judgments should only be expressed after long and technical discussion. On the other hand, the eschatology of the Gospels has not yet begun to interest those who are meant to be the principal readers of this book: I am not familiar enough with it myself to attempt anything like an adequate treatment: and I believe that the layman's best preparation for the time when it may come to be discussed in trains and smoking-rooms is to be forearmed with a clear understanding of the sensible, practical, spiritual and yet not "otherworldly" nature of the traditional Gospel.

S. C. CARPENTER

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A PARSON'S DEFENCE

CHAPTER I

NONE OTHER NAME

It is always well, if possible, to begin the first chapter of a book by repeating a popular truism and denouncing a friendless abuse. And therefore I will admit at once that our Lord Jesus Christ was not in any ordinary sense of the word a priest, and that clericalism is a formidable menace to the Church. But at the same time it is only fair to add that our Lord was not in any Christian sense of the word a layman, and that this volume is largely in praise of sacerdotalism.

What, then, is the difference between a priest and a layman? And what is the difference between clericalism and sacerdotalism? I can best indicate my answer to both these questions in the following way. The number of things by which apparently sensible men are alienated from the Christian Church is unfortunately very large. Of these things some go to prove that the Church is not so Christian as it should be, some that the men are not so sensible as

they appear. Clericalism is to be numbered among the former things, sacerdotalism among the latter.

A common complaint of middle-aged laymen about the younger clergy is that they magnify their office. Leaving aside the fact that the expression is used by S. Paul[1] of his own methods, it may be said at once that if only all the clergy could be persuaded for one day to magnify their office, as it is magnified in the New Testament and in the Ordinal, it would be an incalculable gain. The real trouble is that some of us magnify ourselves. We parsons of the Church of England are not, I think, so sorely tempted to commit the sin of clericalism as those who are only preachers. Our Ordination, our sacraments, our uniform, our ordered liturgy and gestures, our Eastward position, are all meant to keep alive in us the spirit of *Non nobis Domine*. And perhaps there is not very much to be proud of in our preaching. Yet there is in us pride, a deadly sin. Laymen, pray for your clergy, tell them of their faults, do what you can to reduce them to the mind which was in Christ Jesus, but always remember that it is a difficult and dangerous trade to be a priest. The very things that should have been for our wealth are sometimes an occasion of falling. It is a short step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Sacerdotalism is liable at any moment to degenerate into clericalism. *Corruptio optimi*. There are times when people take knowledge of even an unlearned and ignorant minister that he has been with Jesus,

[1] Rom. xi. 13. The Revised Version has, "I glorify my ministry."

and there are times when it is with us as it was with Jonah, "The men knew that Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them." Because he had told them! He, of all people in the world, had told them! He, the ordained minister, the man of God, the prophet! It is the denial of Peter; it is faith unfaithful; it is the blasphemy of a believer.

And yet there is hope. Jonah is taught. Peter is forgiven. Motives are purified. Blasphemy repents. Faith is renewed. How is it? Because all the time there was a glimmer. The wicked disciple was a disciple still. Faith was asleep; misused; distorted; terrified into a momentary profanity; but not destroyed. I have often felt that even the miserable "Christ-party," on whom S. Paul in his Corinthian letters poured out all the vials of his honourable indignation, was not altogether to be hated. They claimed an exclusive possession of the Lord and disparaged those who had not known Him in what they called their way. In this they were utterly wrong and utterly unchristian. But perhaps it was only twisted zeal. No doubt unchristian Christians are farther from the Kingdom than Christ-like non-Christians, but there is hope even for them. Perhaps when S. Paul returned to Corinth with his "rod" he was able to restore them to a "spirit of meekness." It is abominable to claim exclusive possession of the Lord, but, after all, it was the Lord of Whom they claimed possession.

But happily this difficult and dangerous trade is

not without its dignity. It is worth learning, and it is worth pursuing. No priest of the Church is able to forget (and the Church does not mean him to forget) that he was commissioned by the laying on of Apostolic hands with the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God." There is no parson but is aware that while three-fourths of the Christian life is lived in streets and fields and factories and offices and homes by anybody who has the spirit of Christ in his soul, there is one-fourth which is capable of being ministered in church, and that he is the man who has been told to minister it. There are such things as the Word of God and the Sacraments of Christ, and he has been commissioned to dispense them. There is a House of Prayer of which he is the caretaker. There is an Approach which it is his business to keep clear. There is a Master, Who, but for his words and work, would be even more forgotten than He is. Every priest feels that he is in a very intimate and personal way the servant of the Lord Jesus. Of course the Great Shepherd of the sheep belongs to the whole flock, and the clergy are no better than the laity. But if the Great Shepherd is anything at all, He is *Pastor pastorum*. Three-quarters of His earthly ministry was devoted to the training of His ministers, and a large part of His work to-day is done through them. They have, it may be hoped, a genuine belief in the priesthood of the whole Body of Christ, and in the direct communication of every member of the Body with the Head, but at the same time they cannot help feeling

that they are men to whom has been delivered Christ, the Saviour; that they are His ministers, appointed to apply His grace wherever it is needed and to fill in by such actual application the outlines of His world-wide and time-long plan. Personal loyalty to the Lord is the very breath of their nostrils, and the Lordship of Jesus is the foundation on which their whole work is built.

It is not easy to insist on this without incurring the charge of arrogance. The same dear people who over-rate to a preposterous extent our personal holiness are often the first to minimise the reality of our commission. And yet we make no claim whatever to be "choice and master spirits"; only to be chosen, ministering spirits. It is to us extraordinarily interesting and exhilarating to be the instruments of our Divine Master, and most of us do not care enough for logic to press for a logical conclusion. As a rule we are content to say, "There is such a thing as the grace of orders, distinct from membership of the Church." But if we are driven to draw the inference and to say exactly what laymen lack, we are perfectly sincere in maintaining that the clerical *peculium* is not one of works or merit, but of grace.

We do not take our stand upon personal efficiency. The condition of our ministry is sacramental. It is at once so simple as to be within the reach of any one,[1] and so mysterious as to admit of no possible

[1] Unfortunately, in spite of the brave efforts of a few Communities and Societies, some Diocesan Committees, and a handful of subscribers, there still remains a financial qualification for the Ministry which would have excluded most of the Apostles.

substitute. But it is not a merit. It is vocation crowned by Ordination. The thin, white line of Apostolical succession has the romance of a royal genealogy and the homely security of marriage, but it is only exclusive in the sense of a cabman's licence or a medical degree. The line is drawn for the protection of the public. And those who are on, I will not say the upper, but the inner side of that line, the staff, the professionals, the Government employés, are happy because the Lord has said to them, "I want you to hand the Word and Sacraments to the people." They have been lucky in the ballot. They have drawn the privilege of special service. It may indeed be the fulfilment of a life's ambition. But at least they are not self-made. Their service is a response. The great error of the great soul of Luther was that his theology was too self-conscious and self-centred. He was sentimental in the sense in which Protestantism is always sentimental. The universe of one who holds the Lutheran form of the doctrine of justification by faith is not theocentric but anthropocentric. In fact, it is even, if I may coin the word, egocentric. He says, "I am the centre. I create by faith." But the Churchman, and especially the priest, says, "I am nothing; I am a mere point on the circumference; I am, in fact, the limit, but the Lord has been very good to me." The only thing he knows is that the Lord has had mercy on him and forgiven him, and therefore the only rational (or Christian) thing for him to do is to preach, not himself, but Christ Jesus as Lord.

But it is, as I say, a dangerous trade. There are times when we betray our Master. We are disloyally content to utter vague truisms about, say, "the higher life," or "unseen things," or "the spiritual side of human possibilities." This, among well-educated people who are accustomed to talk largely by reference and allusion, might sometimes pass, though even among educated people few are brave enough to follow up such hints relentlessly. Not every one is willing to make full use of the self-acting scalpel, thus gracefully indicated by the considerate priest. Too often it is a real denial. The drawing-room is sometimes a Coward's Castle as well as the pulpit. The tact that is a synonym for fear is one of our great failings. It is a less frequent, but also less venial, sin when we are dealing with working-folk. We formally invite them to come to church, when we really mean, but are not brave enough to say, that we want them to have more of Jesus in their lives. No doubt it is easier to murmur platitudes about the duty of public worship than to say boldly, "The heart of Jesus longs for your love and allegiance."[1] No doubt plain speaking about Christ in private conversation makes people feel uncomfortable, and no doubt there are decencies which must be observed, but the religion of Christians is Christ. It is Christ with Whom we have to do and of Whom we have to speak.

I used just now the word "professional." There

[1] This is admirably expressed by Miss Flora L. Freeman in *Religious and Social Work amongst Girls*, pp. 27, 28.

is a sense in which we need to become more professional, with a deeper and readier knowledge of our trade, more vigilant ambassadors for Christ. A tacit distinction is sometimes drawn between the doctor and the clergyman. The business of the one is urgent, that of the other optional. This would occur less often if we took ourselves more seriously.

"More seriously." Again I find myself using an ambiguous word. It may suggest either the oily cant which seeks to improve or the elephantine pomposity which succeeds in devastating every situation. But it may also mean Christianity. Therefore to avoid giving any kind of countenance either to the insincere or the destructive kind of religious conversation, let me say that if we took our work more seriously we could often afford to take ourselves more lightly. It is not necessary always to talk religion or to consider ourselves insulted by every oath. But it is necessary always to be Christian, and incidentally to remember that this is sometimes shown by not talking religion, and not being insulted by an oath.

But when we do talk religion we have to say what we mean. From time to time it is likely enough that we may mean Providence or One above or ultimate realities or Evensong or even a Men's Service. But what we must mean everywhere and always is Christ, His Gospel and His Church.

When laymen say that clergy are not business-like they may be vulgarly hankering after a commercialism to which we must never stoop; they may be rightly demanding more efficient methods. And

they may be sorrowfully expressing what is being written in the books of the Recording Angel. It is more difficult than laymen think to refrain from being either an elephant or a Pharisee or a worldling or a commercial traveller. But our vocation is the same as that of S. Paul. And S. Paul's Corinthian method on the whole is sound. There are modern qualifications to be made, there must be courtesy, patience, consideration, there must be *ad hominem* accommodation, and the recollection of other methods of approach, but in the main S. Paul was right when he said, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified."

The business of the merchant, according to Ruskin, is to supply men with goods, and he must at all costs fulfil the obligations of his trade. He must supply what he professes to supply. He must obtain it from wherever it is produced, and distribute it according to demand. Nay, he must anticipate demand, and, if he may by lawful means, create it. In the business of the grace of Christ, there is no particular competition; efficiency brings no particular prospect of personal advantage. The means of production, distribution, and exchange are not in private or even human hands. But not only is your merchant bound in Christian honour to be willing at all times to supply the Gospel, but he should also be able to commend his Gospel to the public, to ensure that his goods shall really be consumed and used. Whether or not he will be able to do this depends on whether or not his Gospel is a Gospel, whether or not his Jesus is the Eternal Christ.

There must be nothing in the Eternal Christ—and it is our confident assertion that there is nothing in Jesus of Nazareth—that belongs only to one type or nation or generation, to one time of life or even to one sex.' In the twelfth century Pope Innocent the Third wrote, "The cross on the altar stands between two candlesticks because Christ in the Church is the mediator between two peoples, the corner stone, who has made two (peoples) one. To him came the Shepherds from Judæa, the Magi from the East." [1] Bishop Andrewes says, "The Jews, they represent Truth; to them it belongeth properly; for Truth was where were 'the oracles of God;' and they were with the Jews. The Gentiles, they claim by Mercy, that is their virtue . . . but when 'the partition wall was broken down' and the two met in one, then also in a sense mercy and truth met together. So these two.

"And so the other two likewise. For Righteousness, she was where the Law was . . . but Peace was where Christ was, in the Gospel. *Ipse est Pax Nostra;* Peace and Peacemaker both, *Qui fecit utraque unum.* That hath made the law and the Gospel, the Old Testament and the New to be bound together now both in one volume." [2]

Jeremy Taylor says—

"He died not by a single or a sudden death, but He was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world: for He was massacred in Abel, saith S.

[1] *De sacro altaris mysterio*, ii. 21, quoted in Vernon Stanley's *Studies in Ceremonial*, p. 182 n.

[2] *Sermons on the Nativity*, Sermon xi.

Paulinus; He was tossed upon the waves of the sea in the person of Noah; it was He that went out of His country, when Abraham was called from Charran, and wandered from his native soil: He was offered up in Isaac, persecuted in Jacob, betrayed in Joseph, blinded in Samson, affronted in Moses, sawed in Isaiah, cast into the dungeon with Jeremiah; for all these were types of Christ suffering. And then His Passion continued after His Resurrection. For it is He that suffers in all His members: it is He that 'endures the contradiction of all sinners;' it is He that 'is the Lord of life and is crucified again and put to open shame' in all the sufferings of His servants and sins of rebels and defiances of apostates and renegadoes and violence of tyrants and injustice of usurpers and persecutions of His Church. It is He that is stoned in S. Stephen, flayed in the person of S. Bartholomew; He was roasted upon S. Lawrence's gridiron, exposed to lions in S. Ignatius, burnt in S. Polycarp, frozen in the lake where stood the forty martyrs of Cappadocia. The sacrament of Christ's death, said S. Hilary, is not to be accomplished but by suffering all the sorrows of humanity." [1]

The apparent difficulty has been well stated by Dr. Llewellyn Davies—

"It is obvious that if we are to consider the

[1] Sermon on the Faith and Patience of the Saints. *Whole Works* (ed. Heber, 1828), vol. v. p. 528.

See also Newman, The Mental Sufferings of our Lord in His Passion, in *Discourses addressed to Mixed Congregations.* Quoted in R. H. Hutton's *Cardinal Newman*, p. 200, where an interesting comment is appended.

external or particular discharge of duties, our Lord cannot be an example to any of us in more than a very limited portion of our lives. Jesus Christ was a son: and we are told that He was subject to His parents. He was a brother, and a townsman with fellow-townsmen; and we are told that He was in favour with men as well as with God. He had resources of beneficence at His command; and we see Him going about to do good to the souls and bodies of the people amongst whom He dwelt. He was a master of disciples; and His dealing with them was such as to win their reverence and love. He was a man; and the picture of Him given by the simple narratives of the Evangelists is that of one pure, tender, fearless, full of compassion for His fellow-men, and absolutely devoted to the will of His Heavenly Father. But He was not a woman; He was not a husband; He was not a father; He was not a servant, bond or hired; He was not in business; He was not in civil office; He was not a priest." [1]

Dr. Davies has his answer to the difficulty, but I give the answer here in the words of Bishop Westcott.

"The human life of Christ . . . is a universal life, universal in character and in experience, universal . . . by the absence of any transitory element: universal by the embodiment of every essential feature of man's nobility.

"Christ came in an age when classes were divided by the fiercest antagonisms: He sprang according

[1] *Social Questions*, p. 114.

to the flesh from a people proverbial for the narrow exclusiveness of its national passions. He addressed the multitudes with a message which might seem to require from its herald the strong traits of party leadership. And He stands before us in unique, serene, unapproachable, acknowledged completeness, man, purely and fully, and nothing more, without one transitory touch of time, or kindred, or aim. Nothing human is seen disproportionately on Christ, and nothing which belongs to human perfection fails to find a place in Him. If we think, for example, what it is which calls out our lasting admiration for the warrior, the statesman, the artist, for the illustrious dead, who live in our memory for the sake of their gifts . . . types of character as widely removed as possible one from the other, and from the features in which we figure to ourselves the Person of the Son of Man: I will dare to say that we shall discern in Him all the forces of faith—of faith in duty, in truth, in law—of self-control, of enthusiasm, of insight, by which the dead live: every tint which gives variety to the glories of earth brought together in the absolute unity of perfect light." [1]

It sounds perhaps fantastic, but the whole issue is capable of being stated in a succinct and popular form. Was our Lord a Jew? Is it not obvious that He transcends the limitations of His fleshly nationality? He was Oriental, it was true. But He is also Western. Is it not, in fact, the main difficulty of modern Christian Missions in the East that we can hardly present to the Oriental any other

[1] *The Victory of the Cross*, p. 45.

than an unduly and untruly Western Christ? The first line of Matthew Arnold's tribute to the poet—

> "Others abide our question. Thou art free."

can be applied to Christ. But the words—

> "We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
> Out-topping knowledge,"

must be applied more cautiously. If it means that the poet is an eternal enigma, that he knows but will not tell the answer to our questions, it must be said at once that our Lord is no proud Gnostic, hugging the incommunicable perfection of His knowledge. He is the Speech of God. He is the answer of Heaven to the doubts of men. He is the continual answer to all doubts that can be born. We cannot outgrow Him. He has His message to East and West, to black and white, to richer and poorer, to better and worse, to generation after generation and century after century, even to the bustling and most un-Palestinian age of steam and electricity and petrol in which we live to-day. If it be true (as it surely is) that Shakespeare is the catholic poet, that

> "All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
> All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
> Find their sole speech in that victorious brow,"

then it is true also that our Lord is in a better, because more affirmative, more answering and revealing sense, the catholic Man. In the much-quoted words of Browning—

> "I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ
> Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
> All questions in the earth and out of it."

Therefore, when we present our Gospel and our Jesus, it is with the unshaking and unshakable conviction that the Gospel has not ceased to be a Gospel, and that Jesus is still Christ. Like the parents of the cripples and demoniacs in the Gospels, like Andrew, when Philip and his Greek friends appealed to him, our sole wish is to bring the Master and the men together. "It belongs not to our care" to increase the numbers of our congregation, or our Bible-class, or even (in the first instance) to expound the Creed. The Master will presently decide whether all that is to be done or not. His own method "in the days of His flesh" was to lodge among men and to entrust Himself to them, and our method must be to introduce and entrust men to Him. And when this has been done as well as may be, we say, "If you find any ground for responding to the appeal which our Lord makes, you will then be riper to appreciate what He said about the Father and the Holy Spirit and the Church."

Sometimes we begin in a still more homely, practical, pragmatic way. We say, "Here is the Church. It exists. It has its lines of thought and its peculiar activities. It aims at producing, and it produces a definite result. Have you observed it? You may think it obsolete, or corrupt, or obscurantist. But have you noticed how Smith, a man who believes himself to have been converted to Christ a year ago and was subsequently confirmed, has only been drunk on one occasion since? And do you know that after this outburst he at once sought the

only means of reparation that he knew? We call your attention to the appeal of Christ indwelling in the Church. Christ at His altar, and His servants in their pulpits, say, 'Come and see.' Whether you are an artist, a physician, a philosopher, a socialist, good or bad, traditionalist or revolutionary, a director or a labourer, an explorer or an old lady, bond or free, man or woman, you can find amid the varied activities of the Church a point of contact with our Lord." Of these points of contact it is perhaps worth while to name a few. Dogma, discipline, healing both bodily and mental, ritualism, enquiry, a sense of the importance, fruitfulness, and fruitlessness of the work of social regeneration, sermons, the saints, especially Blessed Mary, slum-work, Harvest-thanksgivings, the ensuing of peace and the vindication of liberty, have all been schoolmasters to lead men to Christ. But the end is the same. The religion of all Christians, consciously or unconsciously (in modern language one-fifth consciously and four-fifths below the threshold), is Christ. There is no other. Whether we are dealing with Smith or De Vere we are pledged to present Jesus as the only Name under Heaven given among men whereby all may receive health and salvation and come to the knowledge of God. More and more as our growing experience carries us beyond the text-books of our earlier education, we come to see that herein is our chief appeal, and our chief hope of a response. For there are some who cannot believe in God, who can and do believe in Christ.

Perhaps I exaggerate. I am prepared to bow

my head before the charge of narrow-mindedness, but I do not want to be either silly or intolerant, though I would seem either for the Gospel's sake. Perhaps I am too intransigent. My sympathy is probably imperfect with those who may be approaching the Gospel along other lines, the lines of Theism, Immanence, Beauty, Law, Psychology. But my education, like that of most parsons, and my most congenial studies have been humane and literary rather than scientific, theological rather than philosophic. Like most parsons, I live among simple people who have a nominal Christianity, not much imagination, not much appreciation of beauty, not much beauty to appreciate. I have therefore become accustomed to play my strongest lead, the appeal of Christ to poor men, and I have not the smallest doubt that this is the most Christian thing to do. But I will make three qualifications.

(1) I want to take any ground that may be offered to me, and I guarantee to erect a finger-post thereon. Distance no object. For example, the Book of Judges is a long way from Christ, but there is a road that leads from the one to the other. Naturally, I cannot promise that the finger will always point in the direction in which you have been going up to now.

(2) There are many methods of approach, more now than ever before. To a Society lady, if I were ever to meet one, I might say, "Read S. Luke right through, and then come and talk to me about it." To an actor I might say, "Go to Ober-Ammergau, or even the nearest ritualistic church."

To a burglar I should say, "Come to our Lantern Service on Good Friday night." To a member of Parliament I might suggest that he should read the letters of William Law to Bishop Hoadley. A Natural Scientist, if I dared ever to address one, I should remind that we are men.

(3) I am aware that what educated men all over the world are feeling most is the Immanence of God. A great many modern men, if they are approaching the Gospel at all, are approaching it along the line of beauty. Good. It is, indeed, a pleasant line. If I were not a Christian, I would be a pagan. Were I not driven, I must not say to choose, but to cling to the only religion I have ever heard of which contains Redemption, I would be a jolly pagan. It is ever so much more interesting than being a Theist or a Unitarian. And if I have been too rigid, too Puritanically Christian, a later chapter will perhaps do something to restore the balance. But for myself I have never been quite able to believe that there is such a thing as Natural Religion, except, of course, dancing and sacrifice. Theologically, this modern method does not seem to me promising. Theologically, it seems to me better to postpone the consideration of the red hands of Nature or the connection between the beauty of a tree and the love of God until the question of "What think ye of Christ?" has been faced. I do, indeed, seem to have S. Paul in at least one place (Rom. i. 20) against me, and it is hardly necessary to say that countless theologians in all ages of the Church have written admirable

books and essays on Theism. No doubt a number of people find it possible to argue as S. Paul does to the Romans. They find God in Creation, and then argue that the Divine Being is likely to reveal Himself, and that the expected revelation is to be found in Christ. The theologians, notably in our own day Dr. Tennant and Dr. Illingworth, write, as Christians, for intelligent people who are aware of the existence of Christianity, and they expound, very successfully, as I think, the reasonableness of Theism. But they would be the last to claim that they had established God's existence by scientific proofs, or had indeed done any more than show the comparative reasonableness of the belief in it. Theologically, then, I do not expect very much along this line. But as a not strictly theological, but none the less useful and admirable, approach the belief in the presence of God will be treated in another chapter of this book.

So we continue to preach the Incarnation and to maintain and deepen, as far as we can, in ourselves and in all whom we can touch, a personal devotion to our Lord. We regard the Incarnation as the centre of the world's history, the result of all that came before it, and the cause of all that followed it. We regard the Incarnate Son as gathering up into Himself all the goodness of humanity. We are not shocked or startled to read of pre-Christian avatars, because we think that the Event which came in the fulness of time was *inter alia* the satisfaction of a human instinct. We love to find in the lives of the saints or in the modern novel some echo of the

Divine Perfection. In *Alec Forbes* the scholar and ex-drunkard, Cupples, is watching by the bedside of the convalescent and repentant Alec. "One of God's lyric prophets, the lark, was within earshot, pouring down a vocal summer of jubilant melody. The lark thought nobody was listening but his wife; but God heard in Heaven, and the young prodigal heard on earth. He would be a good child henceforth, for one bunch of sunrays was enough to be happy upon. His mother entered. She saw the beauty upon her boy's worn countenance: she saw the noble watching love on that of his friend; her own filled with light, and she stood transfixed and silent. Annie entered, gazed for a moment, fled to her own room, and burst into adoring tears. For she had seen the face of God, and that face was Love—love like the human, only deeper, deeper—tenderer, lovelier, stronger. She could not recall what she had seen, or how she had known it; but the conviction remained that she had seen His face, and that it was infinitely beautiful." In *David Copperfield* the poor little girl-waif has been rescued by old Peggotty, and she writes to Ham, "When I find what you are, and what uncle is, I think what God must be, and can cry to Him." We use all these as illustrations of the Love of Christ, and we use all stories and examples of devotion and patriotism, the fantastic loyalty of a John Inglesant to his king, the love of wife or mother, and then say, "This, and more than this, is what we want you to have for Him. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things

are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, remember that all these things are found in Christ, and in His service you will find the fullest exercise of all of them."

We do not want to be misunderstood in this. We respect the aims of those who, like Father Tyrrell in his *Much-abused Letter*, an *argumentum* very much *ad hominem*, put theology on purpose in its lowest possible terms. We are unfeignedly delighted when Sir Oliver Lodge in his *Catechism* and elsewhere finds it possible to express so much of the Faith in terms of science. We are stirred when Mr. Campbell eloquently bids us "go with J. Keir Hardie to the House of Commons, and listen to his pleading for justice to his order, and you see the Atonement."[1] We respect all this, but it is only possible because there is really an Atonement. In making the comparison the standard is assumed. It is useless to say that the widow's mite may be as good as a bank-note, unless it is understood to begin with that a bank-note is a very valuable gift. "Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves" is an excellent maxim, if two things be granted, the truth of arithmetic and the existence of pounds. We have a lurking fear that some modern writers in their anxiety to commend the Faith to unwilling ears, have reversed the proper order. They first enlist the sympathy of their readers in the great Crusade

[1] *The New Theology*, p. 173.

of Sacrifice. They point to the love of Mr. Peggotty and Cupples and of patriot and wife and mother; they make a scourge of cords and drive out of the Temple all that is dishonourable and base; they recall innumerable examples of devotion and self-sacrifice. And then, casting about for a suitable centre to all this, they pitch upon the Cross of Christ. Here, they say, is the supreme example. It shall give a name to all the rest. All else shall be expressed in terms of it. Any and every sacrifice shall be called a Cross. Each hero is a Christ.

But if our fears are well-founded, and this is really what they have done, the disciples who repeat the language of these writers are likely to be the victims of sentiment. It is a mere survival. The language of Christianity happens to be still clinging about the lips of those whose proper speech would be some new religious Esperanto, whose real creed is a sentimental Pantheism. Politics are not religion. Socialism is not in itself Christianity. It is partly, and may become more perfectly, Christian, but which of us by merely taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? The advantage of rational logic is surely all on our side. We say, first the Incarnate Son, and then the brethren whom God has given Him. Christ first and then Christ's poor. Let us be sure about the centre and then we can deal with the circumference. I once heard Mr. R. J. Campbell preach a beautiful sermon on the text, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The impression produced on my mind was that very likely they

would, but that if that was all, it really was hardly worth while to preach a sermon about it.

We put Christ first. We deny that things can become religion by merely being called religion. We believe with Bishop Westcott that our Lord "called out, and He still calls out, as we dwell upon the records of the Gospel, the response of that which is indeed kindred to Himself, of that which *becomes* one with Himself."[1] The key-word is "becomes." The author of 2 Peter says "that we become partakers of the divine nature." We begin with Christ, and from that dogmatic platform proceed to interpret all the suffering of the world. It is true, of course, that we cannot put it all in pigeon-holes with the correct label, but we have a clue. The woman who anointed Jesus with the precious ointment of devotion was not wasting what might have been given to the poor. It *was* given to the poor. *Orare est laborare.* Conversely, "Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these, ye did it unto Me." *Laborare est orare.* The last word (and very likely the first word too) on the subject of social duty and the divine vocation of friends and mothers and rescue-workers and members of the House of Commons, was said by our Lord, "Whosoever shall receive this little child in My Name, receiveth Me, and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth Him that sent Me."

"He took a little child and set him in the midst of them." *A* child. Any child. Not the particular

1 "Christianity as the Absolute Religion" in *Essays on Religious Thought in the West*, p. 355.

child whose name was Simon or Lazarus or John, or even Fauntleroy or Timothy or Bill, but any child. And it may be that the disciples thought, "Ah, here is something definite. We see now. Here is the child whose personal qualities we have to imitate and love. Let us see wherein he differs from the others." But they ought to have tried to see wherein he was the same as all the others. God loves you, not because you are wise or beautiful or good, but because you are a human being. Our Lord is not a man, but Man. To receive the little child is to receive Him.

And even more than that. *Laborare est orare.* It is not wasted. If it be in His Name, what then? What is His Name? "Whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth Him that sent Me." It is the pledge that Jesus is not only Jesus. He *is* the Brother, the Companion, the tender human Friend, but He is more than that. Not only the Way, but also the Truth. Not only the Truth, but also the Life. He is the Eternal Son. To receive the little child is to receive Jesus, but this is nothing, if Jesus is only one more pilgrim—be He never so pure and perfect—only one more pilgrim along the unhopeful roads that wind through a godless world. But to receive Him is to receive the Father, the Eternal, the All-Sovereign, All-pervading God; to believe in Jesus is to be

> "whirl'd
> Above empyreal heights of thought,
> To come on that which is, and catch
> The deep pulsations of the world."

So it is in this interpretation, the ancient (and Christian) interpretation of the Christian Creed, that we find the supreme revelation of God, and the supreme inspiration of conduct. At Christmas it seems to us that we have, in a way that nothing else could give us, a real Gospel for the world. Out of the great Beyond, out of the dimly suspected but unverified love of God, there dawns upon the weary, bewildered, but still upturned eyes of the world the Divine Child. It is not merely the perfection of evolution. There is a new power abroad. It is, in the glowing words of Bishop Mylne, "that once in the fulness of time, a Person of the Triune God, Who not only is immanent in all things, but Who infinitely transcends them all, took into His Own Divine Being the spiritual and bodily essentials of a perfect human nature. It means no mere flux in a great flood, sweeping onwards from age to age —God realizing His Own perfections by raising one mightier swirl upon the flood of transient potentialities—no illusive display of His power in what appears to the fascinated gazer to be a special embodiment of the Divine, while yet it is but one more vision in that Dream of the One and All which is God and Man and Nature and everything that is or seems to be. It represents and it verily is what we cannot express to ourselves, save by words which do but stammer a meaning too deep for words to take hold of—a self-emptying on the part of the Almighty, as well as a Self-Realization; a new thing emprised by the Eternal, Who changeless in His innermost Being, yet adapted Himself to new

conditions: Who then limited Himself in His Humanity, remaining incomprehensible, illimitable, on the side of His Eternal Divinity."[1]

In Holy Week we trace the footsteps of the Man of Sorrows, and we believe with a confidence that has been enriched again and again by experience, that no other story has the same tender grace. Nothing else can so touch hearts and bend wills and turn bad into good and good into better.

There is, of course, a widespread tendency to minimise the significance of the Atonement, considered as "an effectual sign." Since Abelard many of the finest souls have regarded the Cross of Jesus almost exclusively as the supreme stimulus of human love.[2] Sir Oliver Lodge writes—"This monstrous wrong is regarded by some as having unconsciously completed the salvation of the race; because of the consummation of sacrifice, and because of the suffering of the innocent, which it involved. The Jewish sacrificial system, and the priestly ceremony of the scape-goat, seem to lead up to that idea; which was elaborated by S. Paul with immense genius, and taught by S. Augustine. Others attach more saving efficacy to the life, the example, and the teachings, as recorded in the Gospels; and all agree that they are important. But in fact the

[1] *Mankind and the Church*, by Seven Bishops, p. 374.

[2] "Moriendo quidem docuit quantum nos dilexerit atque in hoc ipso nobis usque ad mortem pro ipso certandi exemplum proposuit." *Theol. Christ*, iv. 13, quoted in Sabatier, *The Atonement*, p. 148.

whole is important; and at the foot of the Cross there has been a perennial experience of relief and renovation."[1]

The temper of the would-be orthodox has sometimes been unduly rigid, and the ethics of their definitions not always above reproach. "The victims of Calvinistic theories of the Atonement . . . go astray because of the good that is in them; their consciences are in revolt, and, to a serious extent, rightly in revolt. And we are deplorably weakened when men of tender conscience fancy that the orthodox faith is in some way immoral."[2]

It is obviously impossible to propound here any full doctrine of the Atonement, of which doctrine, indeed, an exact definition is nowhere imposed or suggested by the Church. But three plain reasons why I do not find the Atonement an immoral doctrine, and I do feel myself justified in preaching a more concrete form of it than would be accepted by Sir Oliver Lodge, may be expressed in passing.

1. It declares not only the Mercy, but the Righteousness of God. It was demanded as a vindication of God's Justice. It was due "because of the passing over of the sins committed aforetime." There had been sins and wickedness, and no one seemed to mind. "God does not care," was the thought felt and half-expressed. And here is a great sign that God does care: that the sin of man is intolerable to God, and that therefore He will bear the intolerable burden of it Himself.

[1] Lodge, *The Substance of Faith allied with Science*, p. 98.
[2] W. O. Burrows, *The Mystery of the Cross*, Preface, p. vi.

2. It is not a suffering of the innocent instead of the guilty. If it were, it would be very human, but it would not be divine. But it is not that. On our hypothesis, the Sufferer has a footing in both worlds. He is identified with sinless God *and* sinful man. As God, He is *able* to save us. As Man, He is able *to save us.* He is the expression, the representation both of the Holiness of God, which is willing to forgive, but cannot pretend that sin is anything but sinful, and also of the penitence of man.

3. The insignificance of its arena is both necessary and instructive. It is instructive because it is good for the European millionaire to feel that the Galilean peasant is his Saviour, and it is necessary because we live under the conditions of time. In itself the Atonement is "through the eternal Spirit." It is "an affair of spirit,"[1] a fact of Eternity. But to reach us it must come through the veil, and be expressed in terms of space and time. It must become historical. It must become such as we can see. We see it in the Death of Jesus, Who "was crucified under Pontius Pilate."

But it is impossible to explain in each case the ground of our belief. It must suffice to say that it is always personal. When Easter comes, we do not

[1] Hebrews ix. 14. "It belongs to Heaven, though it takes place on earth. The magic phase 'through an eternal spirit' lifts us above distinctions of time and place, and makes it possible for us to regard Christ's offering of Himself, in all its stages, as a transaction within the celestial sanctuary." A. B. Bruce in Hastings' *Dict. of Bible*, vol. ii. p. 333.

preach evidential sermons. At least not for the first week anyhow. We preach about the woman who stood at a graveside weeping, till her Beloved came and called her by her name. We exult with a sense of the personal triumph of our Lord, all the more vivid because it follows so close upon Good Friday. Ascension Day is the coronation of our King, the crowning of our own flesh and blood, the entrance of our Brother into the condition of being our perfect and perpetual Priest. There is something very intimate and loving about our observance of these holy days; we make our churches beautiful with flowers and white hangings, and sometimes, if we have them, we put on gorgeous vestments ourselves. Some think it is ridiculous and childish. Some think it hateful arrogance. But really it is simple, natural, humble, beautiful, and child-like. Why is it? As a bride is adorned for her husband, as a little child loves to wear a smart sash on mother's birthday, it is for the honour and glory of the Lord.

CHAPTER II

BETH-EL AND DAN

THERE are in England at the present time two popular religions, against which we have perpetually to warn our lay friends. Both are admirable in their way, but neither of them is Christianity. Neither is even the first chapter of Christianity. To give us our due, we cannot as a body be fairly accused of having pledged ourselves to either of them. As a body we are Christian. When we preach we do take our subjects from the New Testament. There is indeed amongst us what Jeremiah called a wonderful and horrible thing, unworthy even to be described as a defect of our qualities. The prophets sometimes prophesy, not falsely but boringly. We dissipate our precious twenty minutes and blast the souls of our congregations by paraphrasing our Lord's parables into newspaper language of our own, by sedulously expounding the distinctive tenets of the Pharisees and Sadducees, or the modern equivalents of talents and *denarii*. But our honest intention is to be Christians and speak as Christians. We are often accused of being too "Churchy." But we preach the Church because it is the Church of Christ. We are thought to exaggerate the importance of the

Sacraments. But we love them because they are the Sacraments of Christ.

The first of these popular religions is Theism, which is widely held in England. Where it is held consciously we can, of course, have no quarrel with it except that of serious and respectful controversy. But it is often held unconsciously by those who believe themselves to be Christians. Sometimes it is even preached in our own pulpits. Have you never heard the famous sermon on the Fatherhood of God, to which is tacked a sudden and quite incredible corollary about the Sacraments? An acquaintance of mine was once made furiously angry because an assistant Diocesan inspector taught his school-children that the falling of the walls of Jericho was a type of Baptism. But at least the inspector had the grace to say it was a type. Whereas the preacher said that Holy Communion was a consequence of faith in God. Surely the first statement of religion is a statement about Christ. It is impossible to begin about the Sacraments till you are sure of the Incarnation. The preacher (good man) was foolish enough to begin at the wrong end, and to leave out most of the steps in such syllogism as he had. Well, let that pass. S. Paul was a conspicuous offender in at least one of these two respects. But the layman is sometimes more seriously wrong. It is not altogether his fault. The Bible-Society and his own agnostic uncle are a good deal to blame. The poor layman is possessed by a delusion, which friend and foe combine to bolster up, that religion

consists of the Bible. All secularists have the Bible on the brain, and undenominationalism has done nothing to counteract the obsession. A large number of the unordained population of Great Britain think that the beginning of religion is the Book of Genesis. Very few, except the clergy, know that it is really the First Sunday in Advent. The parson (not always, it must be admitted, through any particular acumen of his own, but by force of circumstances) has been able to detect the spurious priority that the Book of Genesis has obtained over the Gospel of S. Matthew. He has declined to be misled by the Thirty-nine Articles, or by the arrangement (inevitable, no doubt, and from one point of view defensible enough) of the Apostles' Creed. He has been helped by his professional familiarity with the Christian year to see that it is Advent to Trinity, the practical translation of the Creed into life, which preserves the true order of importance and education.[1]

I have anticipated a little in speaking of the Bible, for I am dealing with Theism. But really the frequent attempts which are made to discuss the Bible before any of the preliminaries have been settled are not altogether unlike some of the arguments alleged to prove the existence of God

[1] The Rev. Stewart Headlam in *Commonwealth* for August, 1911, gives some interesting reminiscences of his discussions with Secularists at Bethnal Green in the seventies. "I said that Christians trusted in a Person—Christ . . .—applause, which increased when I said I did not believe in any infallible book but Christ—the hall was full of people who now know that a parson does not worship the Bible."

before facing the fundamental question, "What think ye of Christ?" Of course the truth is God's existence can never be "proved." If it were possible, it would be fatal. And it is we clergy who week by week maintain that the question cannot properly be approached except through Christ. "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

Dr. Sanday wrote in 1893, "If we open out our horizon wider still, if we weigh the prophets' work by the standard not of any special aptitudes of race but of the common aptitudes of men, we are obliged to confess that their teaching is not such as could have been arrived at by any of the ordinary methods current then, or even by any of those which are current now. A perfectly just and holy and good God is not the result of any induction. The presence of evil in the world, of pain and sorrow and sin, prevents us from arguing from the character of the creation to the character of the Creator. It is a bold and masterful solution to say that there is evil in the world, and yet that God is good—perfectly good, and that if we hold fast to the belief in His goodness, it will verify itself to us in spite of all appearances to the contrary. But such a belief could not be given by any of the methods of science, ancient or modern. It is a splendid venture of faith, a far-darting gleam of intuition, shot through the gloom and tangle of existence, we may most surely believe at His instance and motion, Whom by His own help alone we can at all adequately search out and know."[1]

[1] *Bampton Lectures*, p. 152. See also the noble sermon appended to the Lectures, pp. 435 *sqq*.

Dr. Sanday is speaking of the prophets, and not of the Incarnation. But at all events he is speaking of Revelation, and it is permissible to look at the prophets in the light of their development.

A quotation from Canon Masterman is even more to the point—

"Here is our dilemma. Our moral nature demands a God Who is good, but the facts of the world as we know them seem to tell of a God Who is indifferent to evil. If we could throw into the scale some fresh evidence of the goodness of God, some redress of human wrong, some recorded act of sacrifice, we might dare to believe that even under the evils of the world there lay hidden some deep purpose of ultimate good."[1]

Such metaphors as "throw into the scale" are apt to be misleading. It is not as if the scales were balanced—for and against belief in God, and then, like the sword of Brennus, Christian faith, thrown in, were just able to make the difference and to score a victory for Theism. Christian faith is a spirit which pervades the whole transaction, an element which is present all the time. Jesus is both the Author and the Perfecter of our faith. It is Jesus by Whom we come unto the Father; it is Jesus Who makes it possible for us to believe in God.

I am not concerned to deny the nobility of Judaism or the moral strength of Unitarianism. I only say that the Christian Gospel is more intimate, less distant, less austere than either. Man's vision of God has often been a dim groping after an

[1] J. H. B. Masterman, *Was Jesus Christ Divine?* p. 19.

intermittent light; his hold upon Theistic faith has often been, and must often be, precarious,

"Naked belief in God the Omnipotent."

But the Gospel is nearer. The Saviour is at your side, He is in the street and on the hills and by the seashore. His voice is not merely personal: it is human. He came into the world in order that He might have a voice with which to speak to you, and a hand which He might hold out. He is the great Pledge that the gods have not forgotten all about us: that they do not live a calm, celestial life "beside their nectar," content to fling down from time to time a mocking and impossible injunction to be perfect. Because on Lady-Day our God came sweeping down from heaven, and brought perfectness and righteous dealing in His train, and planted them in our midst for ever, the unfailing and inalienable treasury of grace. We deny with indignation the suggestion of Jeroboam that it is a far cry to the Temple of the Lord. The whole point and meaning of the Gospel is that God was content to be made flesh and lodge with us, to become embedded in human character and human life.

"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." The clergy as a rule are averse to strife, the mildest and most peaceable of men. But like the British public, of which I verily believe them to be a quite characteristic segment, they are a lion when roused. What rouses them is any appearance of disparaging their Master. There are in England places of worship—mostly chapels of an Anglican but

non-parochial character—in which the real wish of at least some of the authorities is to provide a form of service which will be acceptable to all comers. The authorities in these cases are broad-minded men with a distaste for dogma. Now, it is possible for us to feel that their broad-mindedness commands our respect, and their lack of taste commends them to our sympathy. It is even possible for us to admit that many of the congregation—school-boys, undergraduates, sailors, prisoners, lunatics, or whatever they may be—would prefer the religion that is proposed. But that religion would not be Christianity. It is impossible to cast over what they want the ægis of the Church. A liturgy which would conciliate a Buddhist cannot and must not be tolerable in a Christian Church. There are many nominal Christians, most excellent and charitable men, who carry the *disciplina arcani*, the doctrine of reserve in communicating religious knowledge, in expressing religious conviction, in practising religious devotion, to such a pitch that it is hard to resist the sad conclusion that Christianity is not by them considered necessary. It is refreshing to recall the vigorous eloquence of Mr. Gladstone's dealing with the supposed insignificance of the difference between Christianity and non-Christian Theism.

"All differences of opinion you wish to tolerate. You wish to allow everybody to enter your chamber who admits the existence of deity. You would wish to admit Voltaire. That is a specimen of your

toleration. But Voltaire was not a taciturn foe of Christianity. He was the author of that painful and awful phrase which goes to the heart of every Christian—and goes, I believe, to the heart of many a man professing religion who is not a Christian—*écrasez l'infâme.* Voltaire was a believer in God; he would not have had the slightest difficulty in taking the oath; and you are working up the country to something like a crusade on this question; endeavouring to strengthen in the minds of the people the false notion that you have got a real test, a real safeguard; that Christianity is still generally safe, with certain unavoidable exceptions, under the protecting ægis of the Oath within the walls of this chamber." [1]

A lay sermon like this is weighty. But there will still be some who say, "Why not unite wherever possible? There is one practically universal basis, the belief in God. It ranges from Christianity and the old-fashioned 'higher Socinianism,' which was sometimes all but Christianity, down through Unitarianism to the mere faith in an impersonal, 'Eternal, not ourselves.' It includes the Monism of those who can hardly bring themselves to use the name of God at all, and the Pantheism of those who can use no other. Why should not all who believe in God unite in common prayer?" The answer is, first of all, that on neutral ground we sometimes do, with the happiest results. Our own loyalty makes us acutely conscious of

[1] Speech in the House of Commons on the Parliamentary Oaths Act Amendment Bill (April, 1883).

the significant silences in such common prayer. Familiar as we are ourselves with the approach *per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum*, and persuaded that, whether the fact be known or not, there is as a fact no other, we mentally supply the password, the mention of that commending and commanding Name, Which, known or unknown, is the one Way to the Father. But we are sure that many who do not use the Name are commended and made victorious by its prevailing grace. However, in the second place, such union is only an expedient, either temporary or personal. It is an accommodation either to the "licentiousness of the late times crept in amongst us," or to the imperfect faith of certain individuals. We cannot give to it a place in the worship of the Christian Church. With the warmest welcome to any one who likes to come and pray with us in Church, we cannot make our prayers either un-Christian or undenominational. We heartily agree that any religion, even Positivism, is better than no religion. Our quarrel with superstition is by no means violent. We think even the jargon [1] of a modern American sound-health movement to be better than indifference, which is the only Atheism. We heartily admit that individuals are led to Christ through Nature, and that the service of man is the service of the Son of Man. But we do believe in Revelation. It seems to us that there is one normal and scientific method. If anybody thinks us charlatans and our methods

[1] Some curious examples are quoted in Dr. Dearmer's *Body and Soul*, pp. 209, 210.

fantastic, in Heaven's name let him take any way that seems to him to promise well. But we, as practical men, take what seems to us the reasonable method of starting at the bottom step and proceeding from the known to the unknown. Here are you, to begin with. And here is Jesus Christ.

He makes an appeal to you, "Come unto Me." The implications of His call can easily be ascertained. They are to be found in the New Testament and in the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer. Here are a few of them. One who is already a disciple is warned of the deadly peril of disloyalty. An opponent is disarmed by hearing forgiveness for words spoken against the Son of Man; if he even mocks at the Cross and taunts the Divine Patience with losing a unique opportunity, with remaining ingloriously silent while occasion and reputation slip away, the Crucified will say—nothing. But if he sins against the Spirit and tampers with the moral compass by which his brothers have to steer, he has damned himself. Are you Peter? He will bring you to repentance by turning His eye upon you. Are you Judas? He will bring you to despair by turning His eye away from you. An ascetic or a Puritan? He will invite you to Cana of Galilee. A Sybarite? He will remind you that it is not always necessary to have even bread. A quibbler, with no opinions but carping, inconsistent criticism? He will tell you a little story about children in the market-place which will make you see how ridiculous you are. He will be tender to your weakness, stern to your pride. He will

put forth His hand and touch your leprosy. He asks for your five loaves before He multiplies them; He awaits your faith before He heals you. But He does not despise the contents of the lad's basket; He knows when even the hem of His garment has been touched. He teaches with authority and gives no references. He asks fearlessly, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" Yet He is the Friend of sinners and He has a message for the tempted, for He remembers and understands temptation. Are you young? The perennial youth of S. Peter speaking through the vigorous words of John Mark will introduce you to a fit captain of your ardent soul. Are you old? He has commissioned a well-loved disciple to prepare out of his long experience a Gospel which will lighten the evening of your days. Are you a dreamer? S. James will recall you to the world of facts. A plain, blunt Englishman? S. Paul, the most Christian and the most inspired of men, will kindle you, and teach you, and stagger you, and chastise you, and pick you up, and carry you away, and fling you down, a palpitating, penitent, and thankful soul, at the feet of your adorable Redeemer. Or, finally, are you a common, ordinary man of any colour, capacity, generation, and almost of any character? If you respond to His loving invitation, the Lord will build His Church upon you and the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.

The other popular religion is conduct. The

clergy are often taunted with preaching high-falutin' stuff, which might form profitable subjects for the meditations of Archangels, but is not practical for human beings. No doubt we use an unholy amount of holy jargon, but the religion itself, the religion of the Incarnation, is desperately practical. We have in our presentation of it not to make it practical, but simply to show that it is practical. We are told that mere empty dogma is no good. But dogma cannot be empty if it is Christian. There is no such thing as empty Christian dogma. Christian conduct is a consequence, an indispensable, inevitable consequence, of Christian belief. And Christian belief means belief in the Incarnation. Christianity does not consist in being good. It merely results in becoming better. It is not even particularly intended for the good. The typical Christians are S. Peter and S. Mary Magdalene.

This is a point which the clergy have to labour incessantly. They are confronted every day with parishioners, who decline to be confirmed on the ridiculous ground that they are not good enough. They are persistently reminded that many excellent people are not Christians. They are expected to resign their livings, to renounce their Orders, and to abjure their faith because of a cutting from the *People* or the alleged domestic differences in a well-known family of Evangelists. Acquaintance with the kind of lay opinion which is reflected in the discussions of the London Parks, in much of the literature and journalism of the present day, is a

depressing thing. Broad-mindedness is unintelligently welcomed, charity is cheaply and effusively admired, but the search for truth is languidly avoided.

Now, in this search it must be admitted that the clergy are not life-long explorers. We do not, it is true, hear very much nowadays about "the criminal folly of a young man signing away his reason at the age of twenty-three," because it is recognized by those who were intelligent enough to make that particular criticism thirty years ago that what we do is to declare our pledged adherence to a Master, and a general, guiding acceptance of what His best friends have had reason to think and say about Him. But most of us are not so careful as we should be to bottom our beliefs from time to time, although our leaders[1] are always urging this paramount duty. Still at least we take our stand upon a principle. When we refrain from inviting the ministers of separated Christian bodies to officiate in the parish church, it is not because we dislike them. It is not because we think they are not good men. They are perhaps much better than ourselves. It is a principle. The unpopular veto of the chairman at the meeting of the Parish Council may sometimes be a disgusting exhibition of personal pride. But as a rule it is a principle. The theories of the clergy are often cut and dried. But it is something to have a

[1] Notably the Bishop of Oxford, a fearless leader along this and many other roads.

theory at all. The fact is, the laity in this matter of conduct are the labouring classes. It is chiefly they who actually transform the raw material of spiritual energy into deeds of honesty and courage. They forget, as the labourer is always tempted to forget, the principles which make the finished product possible. But the clergy in this matter are the foremen. They know that industry alone is not enough. You want capital and plant and method and direction. Like all theorists, they are really more practical than the actual workers. The laity do need the clergy to keep them straight. Therefore we peg away at teaching doctrine. It is not very popular. Many of the laity (at least so I am assured by one of them) regard it as possibly interesting, but not important. But the point is that it is useful.

There is in Father Benson's *The Necromancers* a very human priest, whose sermons "were cold-cut blocks of dogma, taken perseveringly from sermon-outlines and served up Sunday by Sunday with the sauce of a slight and delightful brogue. He could never have kindled the Thames, nor indeed any river at all, but he could bridge them with solid stones; and this is, perhaps, even more desirable. Maggie had begun by disliking him. She had thought him coarse and stupid; but she had changed her mind. He was not what may be called subtle; he had no patience at all with such things as scruples, *nuances* and shades of tone and meaning; but if you put a plain question to him plainly, he gave you a plain answer, if he knew it; if not, he

looked it up then and there; and that is always a relief in this intricate world."

The metaphor is more attractive than it seems at first. To bridge a river may seem a work of horrid vandalism, an attempt to join what God has put asunder. And yet it is a glorious and heroic thing to conquer the unconquerable, to tread where never man has trod before, to solve the last and hardest problem in the book. Or if indeed there does creep into the figure an element of commercial utility, of accelerated transit and cheaper freight, it is quite easy to express the necessity of dogma under a less economic and more persuasive figure. Canon Scott Holland has somewhere written or spoken of the contrast in structure and meaning between Westminster Abbey and S. Paul's. The Abbey, with its glorious pointed arches, reaching up and up to Heaven, is an expression of the eternal, unconquerable aspirations of mankind. S. Paul's, with its wide arches and its breadth of range, typifies the Incarnation or the Coming down of God. It is not difficult to hear some echoes of the same contrast in the theologies which have been to a great extent characteristic of the two Cathedrals. Here are some illuminating words written by one of the great Deans of S. Paul's about one of the great Deans of Westminster. "His (Stanley's) desperate determination to claim everything and everybody with life in them as on his side. And then after all, what is his side? . . . He seems to me to be in the position of a prophet and leader, full of eagerness and enthusiasm and brilliant talent,

all heightened by success, but without a creed to preach." [1]

The clergy are the men with a creed or theory. They proclaim the importance, nay, the necessity, of theory as against the opposing school of conduct. Or, rather, against two schools of conduct. There are, as I have said, the active, vigorous laymen, who are earnestly set on doing good and are quite prepared to "hang theology." And this school, if it can be called a school, has in these pragmatic days been reinforced by another. The members of the other are not all laymen, but the clerical members are not very priestly. Their method is roughly to break down the distinction between Aspiration and Revelation, and to maintain that conduct is theology. I am not referring particularly to what is called Modernism. Modernism is a large thing. It is partly a protest against a scholasticism, which I am in no way concerned to defend; it is partly a claim to exercise the critical faculty, a claim which is unanswerable, of which the misuse can only be corrected by a truer and more scientific criticism. But there are tendencies discernible in Modernism, and more crudely visible in the New Theology, which is largely associated with the name of Mr. R. J. Campbell, which seem to lead to the assertion that the *vox populi* not only approximates to and represents, but is, and is alone, the *vox Dei*.[2] It is

[1] *Life and Letters of Dean Church*, p. 168.

[2] The relations between Christianity and the two popular religions of (1) Theism on the one hand and (2) Conduct, and Conduct as preached by the New Theology on the other, are

true that the New Theology uses the Christian terminology, but there was a time when Baal seemed a harmless synonym for Jehovah, and a time when Arianism was likely to be mistaken for Christianity. The terminology of the City Temple reminds me of nothing so much as the Emperor's New Clothes in the Hans Andersen story. We are told that imperfect conduct, *i.e.* sin, is selfishness ; it is failure to identify yourself with the great Purpose of the Universe. Well, perhaps it is. But it is rebellion before that. Sin, without reference to an overhanging standard and a descending remedy, is a hopeless, incurable disease. "No view of life," said Bishop Westcott, "is so inexpressibly sad, as that which denies the Fall." He meant, of course, that such a view involves the belief that Sin is an integral and constitutional thing in human nature, and not an alien element which has somehow invaded and must anyhow be expelled. To discuss the Fall is nowadays a long business. I do not propose it. But it might in some degree be a corresponding *dictum* to that of Dr. Westcott, if I said that the campaign against imperfect conduct would be a sad and sorry thing,

capable of being stated under a crude but, I hope, not offensive figure. Christian is a plain man in business, with some money at the bank. Theist is a competitor, also with some money—not so much—at the bank. Conduct is a man in a smaller way of business, who has no bank account and pooh-poohs the necessity of such devices. New Theology has no account either, but he has a profound disbelief in the rightness of private property, and having found a cheque-book left carelessly about, he sees no harm in unloading the immoral accumulations by signing Christian's name and giving away the proceeds.

if it were not for the three watchwords of Revelation, Baptism, and Grace.

It is probably true that those preachers who preach mostly about grace ought to preach more about effort, and those who preach mostly about effort ought to preach more about grace. Original sin is deep-rooted in the clergy. "In many things we all stumble." We must all try to imitate our complements and so maintain the proper wideness and balance of the ministry. But there is a curious reason for some of the preaching about doctrine. It may be silly, but it is not disgraceful. Some preachers avoid doctrine. They also happen to be (and they cannot help knowing that they are) men of strong character and consistent life. They do not profess even to aim at the repentance of an à Kempis or a Bishop Andrewes, and they have not been driven by their needs to sound "the dread depths of grace." Therefore, they preach manly sermons about getting up in the morning and leading a robust and honourable life. Their sermons refer constantly (and truly) to "the teaching of Christ," but are not *par excellence* doctrinal. Other preachers have a quite different method. It is not for me to appraise their lives and characters, nor do they profess to have sounded great spiritual depths. But they are conscious of great spiritual need; they are striving after a degree of repentance which may in reality be unnecessary but seems vital to them; they are aware by virtue of various experiences comparable to that of S. John Baptist when he baptized our Lord that many members of

their congregations do not stand in need of good advice from them ; and they fall back on what they know—the Lordship of Jesus and the teaching of His Church. Perhaps they over-estimate the goodness of the faithful, amazing though that is. Perhaps, in fact quite certainly, they ought to preach more often about plain virtues like honesty and truth. Perhaps their doctrinal sermons are sometimes dry. But one reason for it all is this. They think their hearers have passed beyond what it lies in them to give. They know that they will never pass beyond their Lord.

And if this is so in their dealings with the faithful, it is still more so in their dealings with those who are outside. When these clergymen are confronted with heroic social workers, who are aloof from Christianity, they yield their tribute of respect to men who can do such splendid work on such meagre inspiration, but they are more convinced than ever that what such people want is Christ. Having learned in a hundred cases how bad men can be made good, they long to apply the same methods to the more ambitious task of making good men better. When we are told that the *vox populi* is the *vox Dei*, we have to reply, " Ah, but when you have done all you can : when you have said your last word and put out your final effort, you are only human after all. You cannot create. You cannot even establish, in the way that the Incarnation establishes, the value of the individual life. You can assert that every man has a right to count for one, but you cannot win assent for that as He did

Who consented to become the Ideal Self of every individual. Above all, you cannot create character." Archimedes said, "Give me a πού στῶ, and I will move the world." "Give me a fulcrum for my lever." I understand that it is possible by scientific calculations to weigh the world. An inhabitant of this globe can estimate the physical weight of it. So it is possible for us to weigh the moral and spiritual problem of the world. But if we want to move the world, if we want to regenerate society, we must find a purchase somewhere outside the world. The star which is going to shine on progress, the light which is going to lighten the Gentiles and be the glory of God's people Israel, is a star which had elsewhere its rising. The kind of liberty which we mean to claim for "all that are in danger, necessity and tribulation," for "all that are desolate and oppressed," is the liberty with which Christ has *made* us free.

Over the High Altar in Westminster Abbey is the magnificent inscription, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." A grand assumption. But it is a truth of faith, rather than of observation. Its tense is a "prophetic present." But over the High Altar in S. Paul's is the good news of God, the Revelation, the potent inspiration of the Divine Humility, *Sic Deus dilexit mundum.*

I remember when the New Theology was a nine days' wonder in the daily Press, an ingenious correspondent of the *Tribune* (now unhappily defunct) wrote that it reminded him of a man trying to save

himself from drowning by catching hold of his own hair. The same moral leaps from the pathetic story of "I am Grimaldi."

So is humanity, apart from revelation, thrown back upon itself. If you are going to climb, there must be a ladder. And if there is going to be a ladder there must be something against which to lean the top of it. The Indian rope-trick, in which the juggler throws up a rope into the air, climbs up, pulls the rope after him and disappears, must be truly fascinating to watch, but hard for mortal man to imitate.

To take one final and more serious way of putting it, the problem has been succinctly stated by Professor Du Bose. "Are we to find the divine sonship made so much of by our Lord in a fact of Nature or an act of life? It is an old and familiar issue among us. Did Jesus Christ find man son of God or did He make him so?"[1] The clergy, "as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things," take their stand on the stiffer of these two alternatives. Many of us are believers in democracy, but even when approached on our vulnerable democratic side, we decline to admit that religion—Revelation, Divine Authority, the Faith once delivered—is an exception even to the democratic rule. It is merely the necessary condition of its life. It is, so to speak, the initial fiat of Creation, which makes possible the consistent and yet developing process of the world.

[1] *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 42.

CHAPTER III

"I BESEECH YOU, THEREFORE, BRETHREN"

AND who is this Lord Whose life means everything to us, Whose short earthly history is commemorated by us with such careful devotion? What is His character? When Strauss and Renan and Nietzsche and Davidson and H. G. Wells have said all that they have to say, does He not remain exactly what the plain man wants? After all, what does the plain man want? He wants one who is traditional enough to reassure him, and yet fresh and strong. Well, here is One Who worships in the Temple and does good on the Sabbath Day. He wants one who has gathered the wisdom of the stars and can turn it into current coin. Here is One Who prays all night upon the mountains and speaks in simple parables. He wants one hot enough to hate, yet cool to control. Here is One Who drives out the money-changers, rebukes S. Peter, is moved with indignation, groans in spirit, and yet says, "In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you." One who has tasted trouble in mind, body, and estate. Here is the Man of Sorrows. One who with all this remains bold and free, the master of his soul, a martyr, perhaps, but not a suicide. Here is One Who prudently avoids the violence of His

fellow-Nazarenes and then declines the angelic legions, a Victim Who drinks death from a chalice, not a vial. One who has consecrated failure, loneliness, and the last great defeat. Here is the Crucified.

Impressed by such a character as this, the plain man asks two questions. One, because his experience has made him something of a cynic, and the other because he is a curious mixture of sentimentality and rationalism. The first question is one which almost everybody asks about almost everybody else: What does he get out of it? And it is always felt to be satisfactory when the answer is clearly "Nothing." The answer here is, clearly, "Nothing." If it is true at all, it is the sublimest instance of self-sacrifice, it is perfect love. The Eternal God, self-emptying, content to be Incarnate, content to be given up "into the hands of wicked men," content to die, when He might have saved Himself by either concealing the awful truth about Himself, or blasting them with the lightning of its revelation, the unfaltering "I am" of One Who yet held His hand, this is utter and complete self-sacrifice; it staggers the oldest and devoutest Christian even to think of it. I do not say that this proves that it is true. You will not know about its truth till it has proved itself to you. The Catholic Faith, belief in Jesus, is a thing that you have to fall in love with, and this is what many of us happen to have done.[1]

[1] This is the main lesson of Dr. Figgis' Hulsean Lectures, *The Gospel and Human Needs.* See especially the beautiful passage at the end of the third Lecture, pp. 87–91.

And the second question is, "What came of it at last?" The plain man wants to see that there has been a meaning in it all. Not merely the desire of the pittite for a happy ending, but the assurance that sacrifice is fruitful, effort counts, work tells. It is the spirit which accepts the Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, but is inclined to question (is it hopelessly uncultured?) the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. In a novel when they marry in the last chapter the plain man is rightly pleased. The course of true love has run smooth at last. It has been worth while. But the man is not a fool. He knows that their life is only just beginning. It is not really an end at all. Much more when the novel is a biography. Now it is this spirit which is satisfied by the last chapter of the Gospels. They are the first volume of a romantic biography, redeemed from an imaginable tameness by a certain grim and desperate fact. It is only the first volume. There are others. Some have appeared. Others are in the press. And the Hero is left sword in hand.

Now, when we speak of our Hero, and of following Him, I am sure that the laity often suspect, though they are too kind to say, that we are expressing what we cannot possibly feel and exacting what ought not to be expected. God knows we are immeasurably worse than we are thought to be, but the hypocritical priest is very, very rare. And, indeed, he would be not only the most despicable but also the most miserable of men. Of course, there are many laymen who put us to shame by the

intensity of their devotion, but there are others, good, honest men, who are, or would be, frankly puzzled by parts of the *Imitation* or the penitence and praise of Bishop Andrewes, or by the *Anima Christi*, or, if they ever saw it, by such a prayer as this—

"Domine, Domine, ex Quo omnia et per Quem omnia sunt; Qui me in sacerdotem Tuum elegisti, ne permittas, quaeso, ut sic fiam in gloriae Tuae et animarum ruinam, sed fac ut sim in resurrectionem et sanctificationem.

"Obsecro, Domine, obsecro suppliciter; da mihi aurum ignitum sancti ardoris, ut cum fervore tibi possim ministrare.

"O Jesu, O Cor, divini amoris incendium, mitte in cor meum scintillam vel unam ignis illius qui in Te exaestuat; suscita in me spiritum flammeum et urentem; imprime mihi caritatem Tuam, ut opus Tuum digne perficiam.

"O amor, Qui semper ardes et numquam exstingueris, accende me."

My only indication of a solution is that I suppose it must be more easy for those who have celebrated the Eucharist than for those who have not to know what Jesus is.

But there are, of course, endless differences of capacity and preference in prayer. If liturgies are different, much more will the secret prayers of parsons differ from one another. The devotions of some would be considered crude, or overdrawn, or superstitious, or sentimental, not only by some of the laity, but by a good number of their brethren as well. But my point is that we are trying, according to the line of our nature and the measure of our grace, to be holy priests, and at the same time it is our constant effort not to let the words of our lips outrun the meditations of our hearts or the purpose of our wills.

From time to time we have in our parishes what is called a Mission. This is not merely an attempt to increase the numbers of the congregation. We are very human, and it is impossible not to be gratified by the sense of leading the worship of a multitude. But the aim is to convert souls to Christ. The work is for Christ's sake. Think of it in this way. What, really, except devotion to Christ, would make an ordinary English parson do Mission work? Unlike the Frenchman, he is not by temperament an enthusiast for abstract ideas. He has an instinctive dislike of interfering with the private convictions of other people. He is personally inclined to keep quiet about his own religion. Yet you find him, in spite of his public school and University education, in spite of his British nationality, preaching at street corners, knocking at people's doors and asking if they believe in Christ. Truly, the very stones have begun to cry out.

No doubt there is a peculiar danger of parochialism here. It is hard, for instance, for a parish priest who believes that Christian faith is normally exercised and renewed by the Sacrament of Holy Communion, who presents that Sacrament in what he thinks the truest way, who has bestowed much thought and labour on surrounding it with the best environment, it is hard for him to give full value to a faith which is otherwise expressed. Yet even here he is not hopelessly pigheaded. Find out some clergyman who had a Mission in his parish a year ago, and notice the terms in which he states his estimate of its value.

Once again—and here is a point on which without the clergy the Church would be parochial indeed—our zeal for Foreign Missions, so inexplicable to many laymen, is nothing else than zeal for our Lord's honour. It is born of the simple, evangelistic instinct which made Andrew find his brother Peter, which makes us preach and visit, but it is fostered and enlarged by the world-wide view which as priests we are bound to take. As leaders of the congregation we have a wider outlook; as men ordained by the Bishops of the Church we have a Catholic outlook. We are not merely filled with zeal to enlarge the boundaries of the Anglican Communion. We do not want to see the Hindu ordinand painfully getting up the Act of Uniformity; we do not expect the Order for the Visitation of the Sick to be used among the Rocky Mountains, or suppose that Evensong is the last word in the devotions of a Kaffir or a South Sea Islander. What but the merest pedantry could suppose that either the Sarum rubrics or the judgments of the Privy Council are necessarily the ideal for the Eskimo or Hottentot? What but the merest jingoism could object to the growth of developing, self-governing Churches? What we want is to plant Christ among those who do not know Him; to hand on to the other peoples the Creed, the Sacraments, the Bible, and the Ministry, or, in one word, the Church; to lend them such help as may at first be necessary, and then leave their Churchmanship to grow, as language grows. Why should the prayers and ceremonies of the Indian or the

Japanese, or even the Australian Church, be the same as ours? Are climate, language, race, and colour to have no effect upon theology? The whole Christian Gospel shouts aloud that they both should and do make literally all the difference in the world.

This is a field of thought which has been admirably worked out in recent years. Bishop Montgomery, Canon Robinson, the Bishop of Oxford, Mr. Stock, and Mr. Fraser, the writers of *Mankind and the Church*, have shown us how Foreign Missions are continually supplying fresh meaning to the Incarnation. The City of God is continually being enriched by the nations who bring "their honour and glory" into it, and the City becomes fuller, richer, more varied and more representative of mankind.

But the support of the layman in all this is still very much to seek. True, the May-platforms produce a cheering crop of ex-Lieutenant-Governors, but the real enthusiasts are very few. We are not surprised that men who are not Christians hate and despise Christian Missions. We are prepared for the denunciations of Sir Hiram Maxim. But why is it so difficult to induce the churchwardens to have a Missionary collection or the layman to let his money be collected? I do not want to slip into a whining, complaining tone, but at all events we cannot acquiesce, as some do, in the genial, un-Christian tolerance of *quot homines, tot sententiæ*. Either the thing is true or it is false. If it is false, let us pull down our churches and change our

religion. But if it is true, it must be the truth for all the world. We are indeed learning to recognize new paths of preparation for Christ. We do not despise Japan or Hindustan or China any more than we despise Judæa. *Quot gentes, tot semitæ* is a glorious motto, but it is all a *Præparatio Evangelica*. The Goal of all of them, the unknown Desire of Nations, is Christ.

The cheap sneer, often borrowed to use against the Athanasian Creed, that it condemns the whole Greek Church, all good heathens, honourable Socinians, all, in fact, who do not happen to agree to a particular statement of metaphysical theology, is groundless. It does not refer to any of those persons. It says, "This is the analysis of the Catholic Faith, of those facts and truths by which a man must live (or of the supernatural world in which he must live) if he is to be saved."[1] And the Church, as a good rationalist, wants you to understand the truth by which alone you will be able to avoid a greater or less degree of "perishing eternally." Some of the early Fathers were quite astonishingly liberal about Socrates and other "Christians before Christ." And though untenable positions are occasionally taken in the less enlightened missionary literature and in the minds of uninstructed people, there is no doubt about the Christian obligation

[1] G. Tyrrell, *A Much Abused Letter*, p. 66. It could hardly be contended that this is historically a true account of the Athanasian Creed. But it is an interpretation of which the Creed is patient. According to Father Tyrrell it is "the only tolerable sense."

to believe that Christ both inspires and will accept the unconscious homage of millions who have never heard His name.[1]

Finally, an increasing number of us amaze and baffle our churchwardens by our views about Social Questions. The term "Christian Socialist" was invented by F. D. Maurice as a protest against un-Christian Socialism and unsocial Christianity. No parson can possibly support either of those hideous things. A parson is compelled by the terms of his engagement to be always taking the part of *Advocatus Dei*. Therefore in the name of God I protested just now against the popular pretence that man is God and the patriot is Christ, and I protest here against the practical denial of the fact that Christ has given Divine Sonship to the sons of men. The thoughts of the Wardens (dear old things) are sometimes limited to the "goodness" of the congregation and the satisfactory collections for Church expenses, and they are puzzled by our denunciations of slum-landlords or our curious conception of the duties of a voter. But it is only because Christ has consecrated all human nature and all human life that contented ownership of insanitary property and unscrupulous voting or electioneering is seen clearly to be a sin. The social obligations of Christianity have been admirably expressed by the leaders of the Christian

[1] "In whatever hatred or contempt or blasphemy of Christ nurtured, God has His own elect, who ignorantly worship Him, whose ignorant fear or love He Who inspired it will accept" (Pusey, quoted in *Oxford House Papers*, 3rd Series, p. 15). There is also in this sentence a reminiscence of a passage in one of Dr. E. A. Abbott's books, which I cannot trace.

Social Union and one or two other bodies. "We want to show that it is by the inspiration of worship that men go out into the street to help. There is no alternative between the Christianity inside the Church and the Christianity outside. It is the theology of the Church that makes us care about drains, and our love for the Sacraments that impels us to love the body and flesh and blood. Within and behind all that we do, as its force and impulse—must be the Risen Christ of the Revelation, with the Holy, Holy, Holy."[1] The meetings of the Christian Social Union are often stigmatized as consisting only of clergymen and ladies. Well, if that is so, it is a great pity. The clergymen and ladies are partly to be blamed for it. But it can hardly be their fault entirely. In fact, the clergy are much more likely than anybody else to detect the application of Christianity to Social questions. They are "the watchers of eternity."[2] They have the remorseless logic of the theorist. Their remedies may not be "practical politics," but they are divinely practical. Less interested than either the director or the agitator or the daily press, less hampered than the Government Department, they are honorary, inspired, and irresponsible advisers. I agree that it would often

[1] Preface to *The Church and New Century Problems*, by B. F. Westcott, C. Gore, H. Scott Holland, and other writers. The teaching of the late Dr. Westcott, difficult as it was to understand, remains one of the greatest inspirations to Englishmen in civic and imperial duties.

[2] This a phrase once used by a well-known dignitary, who has before now attacked the C.S.U. for its absorption in political and *secular* affairs.

be a great mistake for the laymen who control things to follow their advice, but it would be an immense benefit if they would sometimes listen to it. The laity ought to thank God for their clergy in this matter as men faced with a choice of evils thank God for their conscience.

So Christ and none other is our inspiration. It is the fashion nowadays in enlightened circles to disparage "Jesus-worship." A great scholar once compared it to "Mary-worship." God forbid that I should attack the memory of a most learned and holy man, who was never one to use words idly. I can only reply that the religion which may have done for Dr. Hort will not do for my poor people or indeed for me. I do not suggest that the term is adequate as a serious description of our total aim. I admit that I can with difficulty frame my tongue to sing certain popular Mission hymns. I have listened to extempore prayers of which the familiarity was shocking to me. But experience has brought me far beyond the stage at which I thought the Theological Tripos was the last word in religion. In saying this I wish not to be misunderstood. I love theology, though it has often obliged me to forego the use of some of those clear-cut devices which are undoubtedly a means of immediate parochial efficiency. I do not even hate the Theological Tripos. It is, as every one knows, an admirable introduction to Theology. (It is also, as very few people know, an excellent general education.) And if we are going, as I hope we are, to preach Jesus only, we must have theology, to

save us from being crude. Some of us have to be as crude as we can bear to be. We are driven to employ large print, crude colouring and broad effects, as lecturers are driven to use words and diagrams. But we do want to be saved from the crudity of some books that might be named and some phrases that might be quoted. Theology is the only thing that will save us, and with our theology at our back we can safely let ourselves go. We do not intend to be frightened of "Salvation Army methods." An English parson who has had some education in theology, who has the decent, reverent instincts of a gentleman, can afford to let himself go without danger. It may be that some of us are too familiar and irritate the laity thereby. But I do not think it is the particular failing of the Ministry of the Established Church.

This, then, is our case. Our Gospel includes, while it transcends, the two popular religions of the day. For we try to show that wherever Christ comes, He brings God. The First Article of Religion is a genuine consequence of the Second. And we try to show that Christian belief produces conduct. The truth is we are intensely interested in conduct. We have never denied that it is three-fourths of life. We only put in the reminder that the first fourth is dogma. In fact, we are constantly engaged in examining the springs of conduct, and we are full of remedies by which we think misconduct can be atoned and avoided. We preach a great deal about sin, and we preach the forgiveness of sins through the Precious Blood of Jesus. Here we are often at

variance with the laity. Some of them dislike plain preaching about sin, and there are those who reward themselves for a very small dose of self-examination with a very large spoonful of self-forgiveness. Our own personal experience teaches us that this is not surprising. Few men can be expected to grapple in deadly earnest with their sins without the help of expert specialists. And so we parsons hold up the Cross of Christ that all may measure themselves by its standard and be healed by its redemption. We do not use quite all the crude language that is sometimes attributed to us. We are not Calvinists. We believe, for instance, that conversion is a long process of the will. But we do use that Bible language about the Blood of Jesus and the Lamb of God which is so gravely offensive to our Unitarian friends. Without such language we think that most men will never come either to the knowledge or to the forgiveness of their sins. Therefore we preach the Cross. We try to do this simply, naturally, practically. We try to forget that the Cross is "a gorgeous subject for a sermon." We are not eloquent on Good Friday. It is a great happiness to learn occasionally that we have been useful.

We are perfectly sure that Jesus is the only hope for mankind. It will not, I suppose, be denied that priests, or indeed any of the numerous persons who in one way or another hear confessions, know a good deal about human sin. It might be expected that they would take gloomy views of life and despair of any remedy. In the main I think they are cheered

to find genuine repentance, and they often win fresh courage for themselves. But much that they hear is sad, and it cannot be denied that they do come to know the weakness of human nature, and the terrible moral falls of some most unlikely people. And more and more it is borne in upon them that for struggling humanity Jesus is the only Hope.

It is sometimes suggested that the future of the race depends on Education. If it does, it depends also on what is meant by education. There are cultured critics with well-stored minds who are dancing along the primrose path that leads to the barren futility of hell. But the decisive battle is fought in the field of character. The roots of character are spiritual; its fruit is practical. Christian character is rooted in Christ, and its fruits are the fruits of His Spirit. The kind of wisdom that we want is the worshipping wisdom of the Magi.

It has often been remarked[1] that the education of the Athenians was not philosophic, but poetic. The true school of citizens was not the Porch or the Academy, but the Temple of Dionysus. The real sermons were the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles. Here and there a few cultured persons meditated on the nature of Justice, Beneficence and Piety, but thousands of plain people were encouraged in the practice of these virtues by watching Orestes, Prometheus, and Antigone play their part on the sacred stage.

[1] *E.g.* by Bishop Westcott in *Essays on Religious Thought in the West*, p. 52.

The education of Christians is the same, on a higher, diviner plane. It is not theology, or discussions about Atonement, Sacrifice, and Prayer, but Christ. A man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses, but in Christ Who possesses him. It is dangerous to be interested in Christianity, to be attracted by ceremonial, or even to believe in the Sacraments, without being converted to Christ. The Gospel is Tragedy, because it brings a divine breath to bear upon elemental passions. It is Poetry in the old sense of the word poësis, because it shows a real hero on a real stage, with a real cross. It is Education, because it inspires men and teaches them to live. Our Lord is Conversion, Example, Education, Redemption, Resurrection, and Salvation. He will trust you; challenge you; put you on your honour; appeal to your chivalry; sign you with His cross. He strikes your goodness with the precious balms of self-knowledge and humiliation: He redeems your badness in the only way that is both true and loving. He breaks you down that He may build you up: He smites you that He may save you in the end. He is for the poor man a means of glory; for the wicked man a hope of grace; for the good man the Incarnation of his dream.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNKNOWN GOD

In the previous chapters it has been maintained with sincere and perhaps irritating dogmatism that the proper approach to God is the approach through Jesus Christ. But it may be remembered that a loophole was left open. There was no suggestion of another door, because there is no other door. But a loophole is a different affair. A loophole is a thing through which men look and take aim at a distant object. The metaphor seems to suggest a military assault ; but the approach to God is not military, but filial, and is only an assault in the sense in which the process of being educated is an assault upon that which the teacher is waiting to unfold. In this assault, then, if it be one, a great army of irregulars is gathering round the outer wall of the city of God. Through loopholes in the walls they see something of the plan and scheme of the interior. It appears, for example, that there is some kind of central citadel, and it is possible to distinguish part of a straight, steep road, which leads up to it from some door which is not for the moment in the line of vision. Meantime, through other loopholes in the wall of the citadel itself, the

saints and angels who are within are watching, with a breadth of sympathy for which they do not always get due credit, the approach of the brave pioneers, and perhaps—who knows?—from time to time they send out their little arrows dipped, not in poison, but in prayer, and winged with "the leaves of the tree that is for the healing of the nations."

Now the approach through Christ is the acceptance of a thing revealed. "I am the Way," said Jesus. It may have small beginnings; the first steps may be due to curiosity or sentiment, or an attempt to discover why your wife goes to church, or the dawning of a conviction that the clergyman is neither fool nor knave; but in the end, if the position is reached, it is a position of adherence to One Who is hailed as the Divine Master. Revelation, if we are to keep to anything like the old-fashioned sense of the word, is a thing which approaches you. The heavens are opened, and Divinity swims into human ken. It is no creation or invention of your own; it is not even the reward of your goodness or cleverness or perseverance. It arrives; it is a gift. And it is useless for any one who knows this to pretend otherwise. A Churchman can no more shake off his Christian faith, the ancient but well-seasoned trappings of ecclesiastical prejudice, than he can shake off his arms and legs. And therefore I will not pretend, if we are talking of roads, that there is more than one. Nor will I pretend that Revelation is not vital in the sense in which the Prophets and Psalmists of the Old Testament

understood it. It is indeed vital to the production of character. The "character" of a servant, if home-made, is counted valueless, without a "reference," but the character, not written, but actually produced, by consistent Pantheism, is in itself bad, and is only to be saved from becoming worse by reference to a transcendent standard. Nor will I pretend that poetic, quasi-religious musings on the immanence of God in Nature are really as satisfactory and enlightening as a complete Theism. The æsthetic grunt of one who sits on the mountain and looks across the lake is far from irreligious, but it needs to be supplemented. I cannot insult even by implication all the profound thinkers who have argued for a reasonable Theism.

But at the same time I cannot forget that Divine Immanence has been part of Christian Theism from the beginning. The very doctrine, in fact, that a revelation *ab extra* is neither the last nor the only word to be said in the matter, is itself a part of the Revelation. The Revelation is a "contributory" scheme.

I must, therefore, in this chapter resist the temptation to abandon revealed truth altogether and to consider merely the value of such loopholes as undeniably exist; to enter, in fact, upon the purely arithmetical question of how many loopholes make one door. If I am told that a large loophole is practically the same thing as a small window; that for a scientific man to climb through a loophole is a thing which, though difficult, is perfectly possible: that it is, in fact, like the camel passing

through the needle's eye, I reply, "Precisely. But that, you will remember, was to be done by the grace of God." In a word, I am constrained, if I may change my metaphor, to agree with what the golfers say. Driving may be a science: and even approaching may perhaps be classed among the arts; but putting is an inspiration. I do not see how any one can expect to know as much as the Church knows about God, unless, with the Church, he listens to what God has said.

Yet there it is. The attempt is being made to reach the desired position without conscious inspiration. There is a line along which many people are approaching, or, at any rate, are "driving" towards God. It is a line which some decry as not being straight, and others praise for its interesting and delightful curves. It is the modern, increasing, and to some extent one-sided and unbalanced perception of the immanence or indwelling of the Divine Spirit in the world of Nature and of men. What is the parson, as a pledged Christian and as nothing but a Christian, to say to this?

I have advanced already the proposition that Christianity is Christianity and nothing else. Its distinguishing characteristic has always been that it consists wholly of itself. I take back no word of that. But I am impressed with the warnings which the Church has many times in the course of its history received against committing itself to any single scheme of thought or organisation, against saying that Christianity consists of this or that. The warnings were necessary because the schemes

were human schemes. But it is a fact that various sections of the Church have at times been sorely tempted to identify Christianity with Scholasticism or Socialism or Idealism or some other human thing. But the wisest heads amongst us have always known that such identifications are wrong. Wise Christians do not commit Christianity to any contemporary explanation, not even to their own. May I be wiser still? May I borrow the superlative wisdom of a paradox and deny that Christianity consists only of Christianity? Of course this does not involve the admission that my own explanation, which is official, conscious Christianity, is a purely human thing. I only mean that Christianity is a bigger thing than our definitions of it, that God is greater than my idea of Him; that Jesus is our Lord much more completely than I think, that there are other Prayers of Humble Access beside the one with which I am familiar. The best working definition of God in my opinion is the Catholic Faith. But neither I nor any other reasonable Catholic supposes that the Catholic Faith is more than an approximation[1] to the real truth, as known to God Himself.

I regard, then, the approach to God through Nature as a partial and unconscious or sub-conscious Christianity—

[1] Christian doctrine, according to the cautious definition of Bishop Westcott, quoted, from personal recollections, by Professor Bethune-Baker in his *Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 3, is "a partial and progressive approximation to the full intellectual expression of the truth manifested once for all in the Incarnation."

"There are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore, and worship, when you know it not;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought,
Devout above the meaning of your will."[1]

I believe myself that the Catholic Faith is everything. But if I am met (as I am met) by people who say, "We do not know or care anything about the Catholic Faith. We would rather begin with everything," I reply, "By all means. And perhaps you will see presently that everything is the Catholic Faith." It depends really on whether you prefer to argue from the one to the many or from the many to the one. I myself prefer to argue from the one to the many. The doctrine of the Incarnation gives me, if only I can use it, a key to all the million riddles of the universe. The inspired imagination of a Newton leapt up and came upon the Divine Law of gravitation. The inspired imagination of the Church leapt up and welcomed and began to understand the meaning of God's great Christmas Present, the Incarnation. If anybody else prefers to begin with birth and death and love and marriage and strikes and survival of the fittest and biology and electricity and mountain-scenery, I cannot regard their method as certain of success, but I think that Christ is the

[1] Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book iv.

real solution after which they are earnestly and honourably striving.

However, the business of this chapter is to welcome the approach through Nature. I do not, therefore, propose to make any attempt to state the ordinary case for Theism. It has been stated with careful reasonableness and glowing ardour in many accessible books. Nor do I propose to say more than is absolutely necessary about the ordinary "teleological argument." The case for teleology, or the detection of Divine purpose in the operations of Nature, is one which is always heard with respectful attention, whenever it is, as it can be, intelligently and intelligibly stated. There was once a teleology which was content to infer the existence of a benevolent deity from the mere complexity of structures. The formation of a river-bed or of the human eye, so admirably adapted to the purpose which they serve, were clearly designed by the Creator. Such arguments—the arguments of Paley and his school—were valid for the age in which they were brought forward. But the flank of Paley's teleology was turned by the discovery of the far-reaching principle of Selection.[1] The reason why the river-bed is so admirably adapted to its purpose, why the river lies in its bed so quietly and could want no better, is because the river made its own bed. The reason why the human eye is so wonderful an organ is because

[1] In one of the dialogues of the *New Lucian*, the late Mr. H. D. Traill imagined the dismay with which Paley, after death, learned from the Shade of Darwin the scientific discoveries of the nineteenth century.

the human eye is the result of innumerable cases of selection. The fact of development, once thoroughly accepted, put Paley's arguments, at least in the form in which they were expressed by Paley, out of action.

It is a commonplace that the teleological argument has had to be restated. It is now expressed in a more general and more scientific way. It points out, for example, that Natural Selection has not been the only principle at work. It finds purpose in the general course of Evolution and in the original possibility of variation. And, above all, it asks whether selection has been finally explained the moment it has once been called Natural.[1] These arguments, which are those of Philosophy considering the facts of Science, and all the other bases of a reasoned Theism are heard with respect by philosophic thinkers. But these are not the considerations which interest and appeal to the present generation.

When Mozley preached his famous sermon on Nature before the University of Oxford in 1871, he said, "Nature has two great revelations—that of use and that of beauty." Up to a comparatively recent date the tendency of those who have examined what Sir Thomas Browne called the "universal and publick manuscript that lies expansed unto the

[1] If I said that we all believe nowadays in "Creative Evolution," it would perhaps imply too large a measure of agreement with the philosophy of M. Bergson. Perhaps it is better to say that teleology, as held by modern Christians, is less purely external than it was a hundred and fifty years ago. See V. F. Storr, *Development and Divine Purpose.*

eyes of all," has been to insist chiefly on the usefulness of Nature. The point of view has often been both theological and teleological: sometimes purely utilitarian: sometimes a little Sybaritic.[1] But in any case the argument from beauty has been till recently neglected or regarded as subsidiary. In modern times the cult of beauty has revived, and the beauty of Nature has come to be regarded in some quarters as a substitute for God, and in others as perhaps the most notable of all suggestions of Nature's derivation from a Power Who is Himself clothed "in perfect beauty," and therefore reflects that beauty in His handywork.

Let me try to give a brief sketch of the history of this doctrine. The Hebrews, partly in their reaction from the surrounding Paganism which they could not at that time afford to countenance,[2] and partly because of the intensely moral, rather than philosophic or scientific or artistic or even poetic character of their religious standpoint, dwelt chiefly on the Divine Transcendence. They bowed before the Lord of Heaven, Who sitteth above the water-floods, Who descendeth on Mount Sinai and on the Tent of Meeting, Who is King, be the people never so unpatient. God is the Loving Sovereign, rather than Sovereign Love. But the later Hebrew theologians greatly developed the conception of the

[1] *E.g.* in Greek and Roman literature (but see next page) and in the eighteenth century in England.

[2] Christianity has included a good deal of Paganism. But then Christianity was not meant to be, and never has been, a national religion. It is Catholic.

Divine Word, or Wisdom of the Almighty. It is difficult to see exactly what they understood by this, but it is clear at least that they thought of God not only as the original Creator, and as judging from a distance in the realm of conscience, but as eternally issuing forth from His own Transcendent Self and consenting to be the guiding and preserving principle of the Universe.

Side by side with this there had been developed the teleology, Theistic and Pantheistic, of the Greeks. Greek religion—I mean the serious teaching of Greek religious thinkers, coloured in the minds of their hearers by recollections of the popular mythology—was essentially teleological, and their teleology was largely due to the devout appreciation of beauty. "The first idea of a Greek on seeing a beautiful spot was to reflect on the divinities who haunted it; and even in the Latin literature there is much that goes against the view" that the feeling for the picturesque was in ancient times all utilitarian.[1]

> "The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,
> Rivers, and fertile plains, and sounding shores—
> Under a cope of variegated sky
> Could find commodious place for every god."[2]

The feeling was deficient according to modern standards of what is peculiarly to be called picturesque. They failed to appreciate as we do the rugged, the Alpine, the sublime; and their theology, when they detected purpose in the beautiful beneficence of Nature and referred it to a Divine

[1] Professor J. S. Reid.
[2] Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book iv.

beginning, was far from uniform. To the Stoics the universe was a gradual self-evolution of the *Anima Mundi*, a Being, if Being is the word, quite different from the Transcendent Deity of Neo-Platonism. But Stoicism and Neo-Platonism were agreed in being teleological. And Christianity with its twin doctrines of Creation and Providence is even more committed to teleology.

Our Lord was concerned with religion rather than with theology. Theology was among the many things He had yet to say, but they could not bear them then. Moreover He is interested chiefly in the highest part of Nature, a part which has hardly yet been mentioned, namely Men. For it cannot have escaped notice that I have taken hitherto a very attenuated view of what Nature is. When it is seen presently that it includes Human Nature, it will be seen also that Immanence alone is therefore peculiarly unsatisfactory, and we shall be driven to return to the Gospel for a light on God in history, and the Divine Will that shapes the affairs of men. But even at this point there is evidence to show that our Lord is at home in the world which He has made. It is perhaps precarious to say that the parable of the Lily of the Field contains all the teaching of the Higher Pantheism—

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies;
> Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower—but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God is and man is."

But our Lord's vehement repudiation of the barren fig-tree, the unaffected naturalness with which He dealt with the water in the water-pots and in the lake, the sacramental manner of His healings, His certainty about the protection that encompasses the sparrows, the kinship with which He touched the barley-loaves, His choice of material for sacraments, His claim in a situation of mingled physical and spiritual poignancy to be the Resurrection and the Life; above all, the physical implications of belief in His Divinity, all these things combine to give reason and colour to the teaching of the greatest of His disciples that "all things have been made by Him, and in Him all things consist."

In course of time the appeal had to be made to a more educated circle. By that time the winning personality was no longer present in the flesh; the gracious words were only memories. It was the time of witness, the time for those conditions to begin under which our Lord normally makes His appeal—His earthly lifetime being preliminary, special, and, so to speak, exceptional—the conditions under which His appeal to men is mediated through the ministry of other men. The witnesses, addressing themselves "to the Jew first," were mainly concerned to proclaim Christ the Saviour, but whenever their audience or their argument required they turned to the Immanence of God as to a familiar topic.[1]

[1] "He is not far from each one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own

It is not certain whether the recently discovered Oxyrhynchus-saying, "Raise the stone and there shalt thou find me: cleave the wood and there am I," can actually be attributed to our Lord, but it was current at an early date and it clearly represents a popular impression of His teaching.

The Church in early days had on the whole a very just appreciation of Nature. At the beginning no doubt there were some preachers, as there are slum-parsons to-day, who confined their efforts to the conversion of adulterers and thieves, and had neither the time nor the capacity to feel or to proclaim the joy of outdoor life. There were in later days here and there some, like S. Augustine, who had been led by the nature of their personal and pastoral experience to take a stern view of life, whose thoughts were of grace rather than nature, who preferred prayers to daydreams. It was, in fact, natural and inevitable that there should be some, perhaps many, who, while rejecting, as all Christians must, the unmoral view of art and nature, the hideous

poets have said, For we are also His offspring," Acts xvii. 27–28 (S. Paul's speech at Athens). "For in Him (Christ) were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible . . . all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist," Col. i. 16, 17. "One God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in all," Eph. iv. 6. "One Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we through Him," 1 Cor. viii. 6. "His Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the worlds, Who . . . upholding all things by the word of His power," Heb. i. 2, 3. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that hath been made . . . He was in the world, and the world was made by Him," S. John i. 3, 10.

and soul-destroying creed of "art for art's sake," or "beauty is the only good," yet failed to reach that kind of appreciation which is essentially a modern thing. But Origen and many of the Fathers were wonderfully modern in their ideas. S. Gregory of Nyssa says, "Look only at an ear of corn, at the budding of a plant, at a bunch of ripe grapes, at the beauty in fruit and flower of the early autumn; at the mountains, their bases green with grass which no human hand has sown, while their summits cleave the azure of the sky; at the springs that issue from their swelling slopes like fruitful breasts, to run in rivers through the glens; at the sea that receives all waters, yet remains within its bounds; its waves, stayed by the shore-side, which they can never pass beyond. Look at these and such-like sights, and can the eye of reason fail to read in them lessons of eternal truth?" S. Gregory the Great says, "If we look attentively enough at outward, material things, we are recalled by them to inward, spiritual things. For the wonders of the visible creation are the footprints of our Creator; Himself as yet we cannot see, but we are on the road that leads to vision, when we admire Him in the things that He has made. And so we call created things His footprints, since they are made by Him and guide us to Himself." "Such sentences," says Dr. Illingworth,[1] "might indeed be culled from almost every patristic writer, and are frequently echoed even in the austere pages of the

[1] *In Divine Immanence*, Chap. II., whence also the three quotations are taken. It is worth noticing that they represent the Greek, the Latin, and the mediæval periods.

schoolmen, while we gain glimpses of the same feeling on the dainty pages of illuminated books, in the choice of sites for monastic houses and hermits' homes of prayer, in the countless legends of tender sympathy between the animals and holy men. The Celtic saints in especial are full of the poetry of nature, but perhaps its best expression is in the famous hymn of S. Francis of Assisi—

Praised be my Lord God with all His creatures, and specially our brother the sun, who brings us the day, and who brings us the light; fair is he and shines with a very great splendour: O Lord, he signifies to us Thee!

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon, and for the stars, the which He has set clear and lovely in heaven.

Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind, and for air and cloud, calms and all weather, by the which Thou upholdest life in all creatures.

Praised be my Lord for our sister water, who is very serviceable unto us, and humble and precious and clean.

Praised be my Lord for our brother fire, through whom Thou givest us light in the darkness; and he is bright and pleasant and very mighty and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth, the which doth sustain us and keep us, and bringeth forth divers fruits and flowers of many colours and grass."

Unfortunately this healthy, catholic teaching was not maintained. The sixteenth century, with its soteriological rather than theological thought and

the excessive self-consciousness of the Protestantism that was then born, threw nearly everybody off the lines. The sermon rather than the sacrament began to be considered the typically religious thing, and the idea of God was modified accordingly. It is entirely true that Luther and many other Reformers had an eager appreciation of the beauty of Nature, and the official teaching of our own Church was sound. Here, for instance, is an interesting passage from one of the Homilies authorised in 1547. "It is not to be thought that God hath created all this whole universal world as it is; and that once made, hath given it up to be ruled and used after our own wits and device, and so taketh no more charge thereof; as we see the shipwright, after he hath brought his ship to a perfect end, then delivereth he to the mariners, and taketh no more care thereof. Nay, God hath not so created the world that He is careless of it, but He still preserveth it by his goodness; He still stayeth it in His creation. For else, without His special goodness, it could not stand long in this condition." [1]

But official teaching does not always win acceptance. The theology of Milton began its deadly work, and with the break-up of Catholicism the seeds of Deism were laid. Deism, the belief in "an absentee Creator," had become by the middle of the eighteenth century, the accepted creed of many Englishmen. It is possible that the French atheists of the same period were atheists partly because it did not seem to them worth while to confess so

[1] *Homily for Rogation Week.*

nominal a Deity. Even Bishop Butler, the illustrious champion of religion in England, is now seen to have lacked some elements of a complete Christianity. At all events, Deism, in fact, if not in name, survived Bishop Butler's refutation of it, and it is still a popular conception. The Deity of many Englishmen to-day is a large good-natured man, sitting above the sky and directing the world by means of miracles (which are now extinct), commandments, and a Bible.

Against this Deism, Paley was not very helpful. It was not wonderful that the science of the nineteenth century, building on the immense range of such facts as those of Darwin, was tempted to abandon the strict neutrality proper to pure science, to usurp to itself the function of Philosophy, and develope hastily a materialistic creed. Even to-day so strong is the influence of Paley's school on popular, as contrasted with Christian, theology that many scientific men, whose soul is unsatisfied by materialism, still think that the Church's conception of God is that of a purely external Director. They are exasperated by what they consider the unnecessary importation of a hard transcendence; they elaborate with wealth of scientific illustration, and sometimes with poetic fervour, the idea of the indwelling Power, and they are sometimes under the naïf impression that they have themselves invented it. This is, of course, not the case. It is much older than modern science. And while the really vital thing is that we should all believe it, if it be true, yet it is also important to show that it is part of Christianity.

This, then, is the present situation. Materialism is dead. Deism survives to some extent in the religion of uneducated Christian people, and to a far greater and more tragic extent in the fancy picture of the Christian religion, painted by those who either attack it, or dispense with it. But Immanence, the Presence of God with us, has once again asserted its inalienable but sometimes forgotten right to be an integral part of our theology. There have been many schoolmasters in comparatively recent years to lead us back to it. The teaching of Scott, Wordsworth, Ruskin, has revealed the sacredness of natural beauty.

"O then what soul was his, when on the tops
Of the high mountains, he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked—
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched,
And in their silent face did he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank
The spectacle: sensation, soul and form,
All melted into him: they swallowed up
His animal being: in them did he live,
And by them did he live: they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;
Rapt in the still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power
That made him; it was blessedness and love. [1]

[1] *Excursion*, Book i.

Or, in the still more famous lines—

> "I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
> A lover of the meadows and the woods
> And mountains."[1]

Moreover, facts have accumulated, and improved methods have opened up fresh and fascinating vistas. The telescope has brought the heavens near; the microscope has revealed the minute perfection of detail in "eagle's wing or insect's eye"; the spectroscope enhances our perception of the wonders of the world. Biology unrolls its stories. The earth becomes more wonderful as science is improved. The Heavens declare more glory as the Observatory becomes more up-to-date.

> "Just when we're safest, there's a sunset-touch,
> A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
> A chorus-ending from Euripides,—
> And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
> As old and new at once as nature's self,
> To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
> Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,
> Round the ancient idol, on his base again,—
> The grand Perhaps!"[2]

Scientists who, like Sir Oliver Lodge, have

[1] Lines above Tintern Abbey.
[2] R. Browning, *Bishop Blougram's Apology*.

turned philosopher find that a spiritual creed alone is possible.[1] The teleological argument, as I say, has been restated. Orthodox writers like Dr. Illingworth dwell more and more on the "spiritual significance of matter." Sacramental theories are on all sides gaining ground, and preparing the world for the intelligent acceptance of that Logos-theology which is taught expressly by S. John and, in fact, also by S. Paul.

Here, at last, we reach the point at which Christianity, having welcomed the Nature-worshippers, begins to teach them more than they knew before.

[1] Mr. A. J. Balfour in an article on Creative Evolution and Philosophic Doubt in the *Hibbert Journal* for October, 1911, p. 21, writes: "I suggest, with great respect, that in so far as M. Bergson has devised his imposing scheme of metaphysics in order to avoid the impotent conclusions of Naturalism, he has done well. . . . My complaint, if I have one, is not that M. Bergson goes too far in this direction, but that he does not go far enough." And M. Bergson himself in the same number of the *Hibbert Journal*, p. 44, in a report (with some additions) of his "Huxley" Lecture, delivered at the University of Birmingham, May 29, 1911, says: "Intuition and intellect do not oppose each other, save where intuition refuses to become more precise by coming into contact with facts scientifically studied, and where intellect, instead of confining itself to science proper (that is, to what can be inferred from facts or proved by reasoning) combines with this an unconscious and inconsistent metaphysic which in vain lays claim to scientific pretensions. The future seem to belong to a philosophy which will take into account the whole of what is given."

CHAPTER V

WORD AND SACRAMENT

THE Logos-theology, the doctrine of the Divine Word or Reason, the Beginning of the whole Creation, through Whom all things are created, is "a bridge between Western and Oriental thought"[1] and between the Transcendence and Immanence of God. Our English rendering, the Word, obscures a suggestion that was patent to Origen and other Greek theologians, that this Divine Logos has a special affinity to men as reasonable creatures.

"And the blue sky *and* in the mind of man."

It is only when this touch of kinship is perceived that the Christian religion can claim to explain the world as a whole or can be seen to be the only religion that does. For man is by far the most important and difficult part of the world to explain. All explanations are hopelessly inadequate, which fail to account for man, personal, happy, penitent, remorseful, political, religious, sensual, humorous, artistic, reasonable man. Fanciful children sometimes have the idea that some day they may wake up

[1] The expression is from a valuable little article which appeared anonymously in the quarterly leaflet of the Central Society for Sacred Study, January, 1908.

and find that everything so far has been a dream. The only thing that does not admit of possibly being explained away in this manner is the child himself. "*I* may wake up," he thinks, "and find that *I* have been mistaken." He is sound on "the priority of consciousness": he knows that even if it all proves to be a dream, it must be some one's dream, his own or the red king's or some one's. The life of man is the rock on which Pantheism splits. Man is indeed a king, red with the blood of battle against acquiescence, and the explanation of his career demands not only transcendental Theism but Christianity.

Hitherto the Pantheistic answer may have seemed easier and more tolerable. It certainly lends itself easily to the language of devotion. It is a light and pleasant thing to say that Nature is the living garment of God. A whole philosophy needs to be grasped before you can say that it is the garment of the living God. Charming poetic fancies rise easily to the lips of artistic persons in the presence of a sunset or a harvest-field, and it costs little to say, "That is my religion." But man cannot be explained in terms of harvests and sunsets.

Both creeds alike must face the charges which are sometimes brought against Nature, the charge of ugliness, cruelty, and waste. It is not necessary to endorse the whole of Mill's famous indictment;[1] it is better to take as a starting-point Huxley's general admissions[2] about the battle between the ethical

[1] In his Three Essays on Religion.

[2] In his Romanes Lecture.

and cosmic processes, and argue in this way. Once you include mankind as the most conspicuous item in the sum of things to be explained, you can cast into the scale against the impugners of religious metaphysic your own moral indignation. The passion which impels you, like Moses, to "stand before Him in the gap, to turn away His wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy them," is, ultimately, God-inspired. The very violence with which you protest against cruelty and wrong is an echo of God's hatred of such things. The fiery zeal with which you defy environment, which enables you to say quite calmly that you never have believed much in practical difficulties,[1] the martyr-instinct which makes you decline to survive if fitness for survival be a thing at which conscience revolts, all these are weapons in the armoury of those alone who are made in the image of the great Inventor, and are marching either beneath or in unconscious proximity to the revolutionary banner of the Church of Christ. It takes a man, and it takes a Christian, to perceive the moral weakness of Pantheism. It is not quite fair to accuse Pantheism of saying, "Whatever is, is right," but the tendency of purely immanental teaching is to accept the inevitable, to condone sin as an imperfect stage of development, and to wait rather than to fight.

The Great Charter of the liberties of man, signed, sealed, and delivered in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, immensely increases the range of Divine

[1] This splendid sentiment was once let fall casually in my hearing by the Bishop of Southwark.

Immanence and also reveals its inability to explain all the circumstances. There are things like love and sacrifice to be accounted for: there is the fact that millions of men have believed themselves to be susceptible of Divine grace; that they forgive and are forgiven; that they are not mere individuals, but lifelong members of families and communities; and that their duty as such is felt to be more complicated, but more interesting and more inspiring than if they lived alone. It would be simple to say that a sunset is in itself divine, it would be unreasonable to postulate the authorship of a transcendent Deity, if the sunset were the only thing that had to be explained. But it is just the remembrance of your mother and the dear old Rector that makes you want to call it God's Good-night. The beauty of Nature makes you believe in Immanence, but man is a thing so transcendent that the recollection of humanity improves the quality of the Immanence till, surveying Nature as a whole, you are driven to attribute Personality to the Indwelling Power.

So Christianity preaches and teaches the personal omnipresence of God in Nature, and insists, whenever it is still necessary, that God is not only over, but within the world, that He is not only the driving and the carrying, but also the sweetening and preserving force, the Will behind the universe. But it is only when you realise that this universe is full of wilful little gods, who live and love, and sin and serve, and sacrifice themselves, that you are driven to re-affirm, as the first and most essential article of your belief in God, what the Church taught you in

your childhood, that He is "God the Father, Who made me and all the world."

There is so much beauty in the world apparently for beauty's sake, and as Mozley points out, the very processes themselves which give us warmth and breath are beautiful. And it is so not only in order that a man here and there may some day see it, not even only because the angels rejoice in it, but because it is the perpetual expression of the life of God. He gives us, we say, our daily bread, but not as the inventor of the mechanical processes of reaping, threshing, and grinding may be said to give it us; or even as the father who gives his sons an education and a start in business or profession may be said to give it them; or as the donor who is content to sign the necessary cheque may be said to feed the hungry; but rather as the love which is willing not only to spend, but also to be spent, which goes about among those whom it would help, entering into their lives and hopes and fears, giving to one, and, if need be, withholding from another; the love of a God Who not only creates but becomes incarnate, or, as we parsons say, a love that will visit as well as preach.

The experience of the two men who were once taking a country walk on Sunday evening is the experience which we all need, and we all could have. "Abide with us," they said to the mysterious Stranger. "Come into our lives and work out on the plain floor of everyday experience the wonderful things which you have interpreted to us from Moses and the Prophets. Show us how the special grace

preventing us, which has put into our minds good desires, those brave Utopian desires, not only to redeem Israel and mankind, but to find the spiritual meaning of the world, may be brought to good effect. We see indeed that Redemption involves death: show us how it can also bring about a victorious resurrection. Apply your Bible-texts to the actual conditions of our world: assure us that they do not break down. Prove to us that our world is a province of God's activity." And He went in to tarry with them, and He was known of them in the Breaking of the Bread.

We have to grasp the sacramental principle of Nature, which is so natural and obvious and easy, and yet is so much misunderstood. I suppose it is chiefly because we clergy have neglected to explain it, because we have postponed the last part of the Catechism till the days when our laity have put away the Catechism altogether. We preach about sacraments, but the subject is often dragged in without relating it to what has gone before. We do not preach enough about Nature—the *a priori* ground of sacramental faith, about the Sacrament of the Incarnation, about the psycho-physical, or sacramental, constitution of humanity, or about the smile of happiness, the bent knee of supplication, the hand of friendship, the kiss of love, and all the other sacramental means by which human spirits project themselves abroad. We do not talk enough about sacraments in private conversation. We obscure them unduly in our worship. There are bishops who actually believe that preaching is the

main purpose of the ministry. Thousands of people have been led to disparage the Sacraments by the same odd, tragic accident of party which produces such curious alliances and such miserable enmities in politics. And all the time the bread is on the Table, already an honest and therefore a holy thing, and only waiting for the touch of God to become magnetic, charged with the life of Jesus.

The immanent life of a consecrated Sacrament is actually nearer to us than the immanent life of the world. We can understand the life of Jesus in the Sacrament better than we can understand the life of the Divine Logos in the world. Because, theologically speaking, our Lord is present in the world in His Divine Nature, and present in the Sacrament in His Body and Blood, that is, His Human Nature. And the second is really the easier to understand. It is nearer; more intimate; more human; may I say, more friendly? In the same way other applications of the sacramental principle are brought out more clearly in the life of men than in the life of Nature. There is the social teaching of the Sacraments, the doctrine that the members of a Church are sharers in a common spiritual life, that God is immanent in the Church. There is the saying of our Lord, that wherever two or three are gathered together in His Name, there is He in the midst of them. This not only illustrates the evolution of humanity, and shows that it was Love Divine immanent in man, which in the earliest days gathered men into families[1] and laid

[1] E. A. Abbott, *Cambridge Sermons*, p. 57.

the foundations of Christian civilization, but it also gives a special consecration to the common prayers of men. It was nothing in the world but belief in the Divine Immanence in man that made Charles Kingsley want to pull off his hat to every person he met in the street. The most fascinating study in the world is to trace God in History, and when evolution is not merely ended, but crowned by the appearance of the Son of God, Who makes it a great part of His earthly work to restore broken harmonies in Nature, Who can say "Arise and walk," as well as "thy sins be forgiven thee," then indeed life has been breathed into the dust of the earth, the seed of the woman has trodden the serpent's head, and the Son of Man is Lord not only of the Sabbath, but of the stars. And when this re-creative Incarnation is extended in the Church and Sacraments, when the grace of Jesus is seen to flow on in channels that irrigate and refresh the life of man at all points from the cradle to the grave, the crude childishness which thinks that the mountain is more majestic than Mohammed, because it is larger, or that the Caucasus is more impressive than the Crucifix, because it can be seen from farther off, is instantly refuted, and the life of man is recognized to be the supreme and congenial field for the action of the Spirit.

Yet it is to be remembered that man is part of Nature, the highest part, but still a part. The Faith and Science both insist on this. To Science man is a *novus homo*, with a short history and a humble origin, while Christianity will have it that

there is some connection between "Our Father" and leadless glaze, and teaches children that they must not only say their prayers, but be clean, and kind to animals. S. Paul in an obscure passage (Rom. viii. 22–23) about the groans and painful travail of the whole creation, looks forward, not only to the redemption of the body, but even the deliverance of creation itself from the bondage of corruption, the advent of the new heavens and the new earth. We confess from day to day our belief in the Resurrection in terms which have often seemed unduly materialistic, and our Lord, when He spoke of Judgment, Hell and Heaven, never spoke of them as the arbitrary sentences of a purely transcendent judge, inflicted from without, but rather as the necessary and even automatic issues of the life lived in the body here.

There are often times when humanity, your own or other people's, disappoints you, when you turn to Nature for refreshment, when you take a holiday by the sea-side, in order to recreate the spirit which man has damaged and depressed. There are times when it is well to insist on the nobility and necessity of the persevering study of exact Science. The men who are chiefly interested in History and Literature are tempted to despise what they may think inhuman and illiterate pursuits. This unjust disparagement has aroused glowing protests from scientific men. I quote one from Tyndall. "When I saw your Lecturer (the Oxford Professor of Chemistry) reduced to the necessity of pleading for Science, and meekly

claiming for it, from the institution which we are accustomed to regard as the highest in this land (the University of Oxford), a recognition equal to that accorded to Philology, I confess that the effect on me was to excite a certain revolutionary tendency in a mind which is usually tranquil almost to apathy in these matters. Science behind Philology! The knowledge of the laws by which God's universe is sustained, and the perpetual advancement of humanity secured, inferior to that of the manner in which ancient and savage tribes put their syllables together, and express the varieties of mood, tense and case." [1]

This "noble rage" would be amply justified, if grammar or philology *per se* were seriously defended as a study superior to biology. But after all what is grammar? The science of language. And what is language? The method by which poets and prophets and biologists, and every other kind of human being, have expressed their thoughts. The beauty and majesty of God are seen in Nature: but the real theatre of the moral beauty and the personal majesty of God is the character of man.

There is on the coast of Cornwall, where the waves hurl themselves twice every day against unyielding rocks, a place where legends have grown

[1] *Essays, Speeches and Sermons* by Bishop Thirlwall, p. 288. A subsequent letter from the Professor to the Bishop is given on p. 311. "With regard to a somewhat amusing passage which you quote from my earlier writings, I may say that a dozen years have made me a sadder and a wiser man. In a late reprint of that lecture by Macmillan, the passage to which you have referred is omitted."

up. It is said of the stone walls which God has made there for England against the Atlantic that they were once the castle of a great king. If it is true, no king could want a sublimer castle. For the rocks themselves seem infinitely more wonderful than the grandest legend.

The tired parson, with his limbs indeed refreshed by the salt water of half an hour ago, but his soul still weary with twelve months of London, sat and thought lazily about it. What human story could impress like this eternal warfare between the strength of the defending walls and the grace and cunning and passion of the besieging sea? How can the little legend, woven by half a dozen or half a hundred generations of the insignificant beings who run to and fro on the surface of the cliff, vie in importance with the superb drama of wind and wave against the rock, with its everlasting plot, its action, its situations, its development divinely slow? Set side by side with this, the legend-makers and legend-heroes alike were no more than the weeds of a summer on the bosom of old Mother Earth, or insects who fluttered through their day of life in a world which had seen millions like them.

The parson watched the recurring onset of the tide. The banners waving from afar, the pioneers sent on ahead to take advantage of the cover at every stone and in every pool, the increasing purpose, the frontal attack, the flank movement, the big guns, the hand-to-hand encounter, the white teeth biting and the nails clawing on the rock, the sweat of spray—and then the turning-point, the defeat

accepted, the withdrawal of spent forces, the ground strewn with prisoners and dead bodies, and the grim determination in the passionate heart of the besieger to attack again.

This desperate courage, the insane and yet calculating chivalry of the sea, won all his sympathies. But he was driven to spare a reluctant admiration for the defender; for the superb insolence which affected to believe that no particular defence was necessary, which threw off in half an hour the marks of the intruder's clutches, which scorned even to take breath at each reprieve, and would not acknowledge even to itself that some day the enemy would conquer.

How could the concerns of men—

> "votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
> gaudia, discursus,"

be set beside this battle of the giants? He remembered the faintness of his own purpose, his willing but inconstant mind, his sloth, cowardice, forgetfulness, despair. He remembered the dull ears on which his sincerest words had often fallen, the dead faith which had missed the whole centre and reality of the means of grace which he had ministered; he remembered pride and selfishness and cruelty and avarice and lust, the established throne of social and commercial unrighteousness, the miserable proportion of *acta* to *agenda*, and it seemed that humanity was weighed in the balance and found wanting. Then he turned his thoughts inland and remembered seed-time and harvest and cold and heat and day and night, and he turned

his thoughts upward and recalled the little that he knew of systems and ellipses and the like, and he felt with a kind of terror that he was renewing his faith in God at the expense of his faith in man.

But suddenly there flashed into his mind the old paradox of Jacob and Esau. "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated." How bitterly the justice of it has been arraigned! And how half-hearted often the defence! A gloss; a private opinion; an inference after the event; an epigram which must not be taken to represent the real Mind of the Speaker.

And yet it is a paradox of scorching truth. For your Esau is your pleasant, healthy Englishman, your product of Public School and University, your genial, honourable heathen. He is incomparably more attractive than the smug, religious Jacob, "whose sins are evident, going on to judgment." But Esau remains Esau till the end of the chapter. Jacob grows to Israel. By nature not half the man that Esau was, he yet has the two saving gifts. He is humble, and susceptible to Divine grace.

Of course the parallel breaks down. Esau can be converted, too. Witness the modern curate, and the Church of England Men's Society. Yet Esau, but for the possibility of conversion, is Nature, and Jacob is Humanity.

The idle personification of tide and rock is at its best a pleasant fancy, and at its worst is animism, witch-craft, devil-worship. No doubt there is a battle. No doubt God made the waves. No doubt

God moves them. The poetic beauty of that second chapter of the Christian Creed which is called Divine Immanence is charming in its own place and order and proportion. But if the part be mistaken for the whole, or if it be given an undue priority, it turns ugly. It is lazy, not always truthful, and it can be cruel. The real drama is the life of man. The real interest is human passion. The real hero is Jacob. He is conceived, it is true, on a smaller scale than the rocks of Cornwall. He is neither so good-looking nor so muscular as Esau. But he is more interesting than either. His very badness heightens the excitement. Will he or will he not respond? You know beforehand what the waves will do, both this morning and in a thousand years. You know that Esau will either have to leave off being Esau, or deteriorate. But Jacob is a problem. The career of Jacob is watched by trembling and excited angels, alternately weeping and applauding. It has even engaged a rich measure of the Divine Consideration. For Jacob is the man about whom the Bible has been written, for whose sake God sent His Son into the world.

It seems fantastic to one who is watching Nature on the grand scale: for the moment it takes his breath away. And yet it is fundamental to the Christian Faith (and the conviction of its truth is the reward of a very little thought) that more important in the eye of God than all the tides and harvests and sunsets in the world is the saving of a single soul. There is no harm in watering the garden. It is wholesome to sit and watch the sea.

Scene-painting is an honest trade. It is nice to have a taste for the picturesque. But "the play's the thing."

Let me add just a postscript. It may perhaps be said that though in one sense the play's the thing, in reality the audience, "the gods," are the absolutely vital element in the production of the drama. This valid criticism [1] is partly satisfied by the admission that the blue sky and the fleecy clouds may be the applause of the gods, and most notably by the ennobling belief that there was once a supreme occasion when God Himself, the great Spectator of the tides, both of Ocean and of the affairs of men, accepted a part in the performance. He did not frown away the comedy; He did not sneer at the melodramatic situations: He went through the tragedy. Since that unique occasion there has been a grand tradition of the dignity of acting and the honour of the stage. Players must needs be humble, because they fall short of the glory of the Perfect Player. And they must needs be proud because it is now a Divine Trade to be a man. "The Lord was not" (it is a pardonable exaggeration, or, if you will, a Hebraism—a trick of speech) "in the wind; the Lord was not in the earthquake; the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." The way of the Lord may be in the sea, and His paths may be in the great waters, but it was only through the lips of the Divine Humanity that His Voice was heard: it was in the Son of Man that His Word was expressed and

[1] Made by my friend, Mr. A. H. Eyre.

manifested. "For verily not of angels doth He take hold, but He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham."

So the parson went back to his work in the big city and was encouraged. Comparatively few of the people for whose sake he existed took any interest in what he did and said. To be in any real sense successful, he needed to have the wisdom of a father, the patience of a mother, the courage of a prophet, the tact of an ambassador, and the love of God. Whereas he was only a poor parson; and the people were rebellious children, hard of hearing and slow to understand. But, even so, they were dearly beloved brethren, with immortal souls, for whom Christ died. That is to say, they were the seed of Abraham, and their manhood had been taken into God. He was refreshed by God in Nature, and he saw that God was even more in man. Our religious teachers are not only William Wordsworth and John Ruskin, but Robert Browning and George Frederick Watts, and, yes—John Henry Newman and all the other prophets of the Church. Our true delight is not in scenery, but in the Son of Man. God saw what He had made, and it was very good. But there is a Blessing reserved for Him that cometh in the Name of the Lord, and for those who follow in His train. Our songs of praise include the *Benedicite*, but the greatest of them all is the *Magnificat*.

CHAPTER VI

"ABIDE WITH US"

A LONDONER desiring, as many Londoners desire six times a week, to travel from his suburb to the City, is confronted by a choice of possibilities. He can walk all the way. He can take the train; or tram; or motor-bus. He can hire a taxi. Or he may possess a carriage of his own.

In the same way an Englishman desiring, as many Englishmen desire at least once a week, to ascend into the heavenly places, can use one of many means. Is he an undenominationalist? He will walk, and the result will be that, when he gets there, he will be so tired that he can do nothing else. Is he rich in spirit? He will set up a private religion of his own. Has he more sentiment than he knows how to spend? He will fall an easy prey to one of the preachers who ply about the streets. But if he is a Churchman he will once again, as he has often done before, commit himself to the ubiquitous public vehicle, the cheapest, friendliest and most democratic route. He will take a penny ticket just like anybody else. For it is the first of the three great requirements, if a man's Church is to be his spiritual home, that

it should be something bigger than himself. It must not be anything that he has made. It must be something that has made him. He must not own it. He must not have hired it for his exclusive use. And yet it must be something. No man liveth to himself, and no man getteth to heaven by himself. So we are driven to an odd, but topical comparison. Our Lord compared the Kingdom of Heaven to yeast and a fishing-net and mustard seed and other homely things. May I not use a like modernity and compare it without irreverence to a municipal tram-system? The Church must be something which was there before you. You did not choose it: it chose you. Ever so many years ago when you were nothing but a bundle of potentialities, it reached out gracious arms and claimed you. The sleepy workman in the dim morning of the day plants a well-drilled but not enthusiastic foot on the footboard of the car. It swallows him and bears him off. By the time that his pipe and half-penny paper and the completion of the process of digestion have aroused him to a sense of the necessity of the impending day of toil, he rubs his eyes and finds that he is already at the Hop Exchange. The unconscious infant in the morning of his life is brought by pious custom and more or less zealous sponsors to the font. The Church enfolds him: accepts his promise to pay: marks him and signs him for her own: gives him his ticket, subject, of course, to the usual byelaws, and by the time that the Church Catechism and secular education and parental care (pipe, paper, breakfast)

have prepared him to face the world, he is ripe to be confirmed and to begin the battle.

Of course there are other less striking but more convincing illustrations. For instance, the family. This brings out even more clearly the essential truth. "Mother must know best" is perhaps at times an irritating reminder, but for several years it is the indisputable fact. And even if, as time goes on, you make an advance on Mother's knowledge, it is only possible because Mother knew quite a lot before you began. Mother was there first. "In my Baptism, *wherein I was made.*"

"There are two quite distinct ways of approaching the whole subject of practical religion. We may begin by thinking either of:

"(1) What we are to do for God: or of

"(2) What God has done for us.

"The first way is the way which to most of us, at first sight, appears to be the obvious and natural one. A man says, 'I want to be religious. What must I do? What is it that God requires of me? Let me know, and I will try to do it.' That seems to be a very simple and common-sense way of dealing with the matter. And yet, if the Bible be true, and if the experience of all the saints is to be relied upon, it is in reality a false and a difficult way; a way which quickly leads to dark views of God and hard thoughts of duty, which is very far from being a way of life and freedom: a way indeed from which a man is likely to turn ere long in disgust or despair.

"We have to learn, and the sooner we are

taught it the better and happier for us, that the opposite is the right and good way, the way which is not of works but of grace and faith.

"It is only as we begin with the realization of what God has done for us, of all that we owe to His mercy and His love, that our hearts warm with gratitude and our duty is transformed into a willing devotion. It is when thus set at liberty that we are ready to walk, even to run, in the way of God's commandments.

"It is the glory of the English Catechism that it *begins by telling the child what has been done for him*, before it says one word about the duties which he on his part is bound to fulfil." [1]

This, then, is the first requirement. There is an argument sometimes produced in favour of the Church which runs somewhat thus—"Union is strength. The bundle of sticks cannot be broken. All Christians naturally tend to associate together, and, therefore, they have made the Church." This I violently repudiate. We did not make the Church. The Spirit of God makes the Church, and, incidentally, the Church made us. Take your own case. Do you carry your spirit about, or does it carry you? Obviously, the latter. So, in the greater case, the Spirit bears the Church. The Church began when the Lord of the Church was conceived by the Holy Ghost. The first Christian was Mary when the Power of the Most Highest overshadowed her. And ever since that time the first thought of a Christian has been a thought of

[1] A. W. Robinson, *The Church Catechism explained*, p. 14.

membership. Health and salvation come to him not as an individual, but through the Church. There is no mention of "a saint" in the New Testament, but only of "the saints." The Church is something to which it is possible and natural to be loyal, because it was there before you were born. Mr. Anthony Hope, in his interesting but depressing book, *Mrs. Maxon Protests*, gives us two men who try without success to be loyal to their Church, and one who succeeds in being loyal to his regiment. No doubt the cases of the two men are hard—harder as a matter of fact than the case of the one—but it is depressing to see principle and membership swept away so easily. However, the book is a study of loyalty. In it considerations of membership are displaced by others of a more personal and insistent kind. There are, however, lives in which Church-membership not only represents, but *is* personal and overmastering loyalty to Christ. These do not appear in Mr. Hope's pages, though the Irishman's struggle is suggested very sympathetically. It is, by the way, a little irritating to find once again the Roman Catholic believing his own religion so much more effectively than the Anglican, but I daresay it is our own fault. Anyhow, it is the way of novelists. We are still waiting for the Church of England novel.

The idea of Churchmanship by inheritance rather than by choice or purchase is attacked from two quarters. The Protestant idea is to select your Church. Of course, I admit that on any theory there comes a time—a period, rather than a moment—

when you must either desert or cling more firmly to the Church of your inheritance. But the Protestant idea—wherever it rises above mere undenominationalism—is to choose your Church. It is the old self-centredness, at least as old as Luther. It has many admirable points. It is manly, independent, self-conscious. But its fatal defect is that it is sentimental. It is not theology at all. It is very English, but then Christianity is not an English religion. Christianity is the Catholic religion.

The other opposed school is content to attach a different meaning to inheritance. Whereas I mean Baptism, they mean birth. Whereas I say that an Englishman's church, apart from accidents, should be the Church of England, they still try to say that an Englishman's church is the Church of England. The logic of facts has brought us beyond the attractive but impossible theories of Arnold and Stanley, but there is still a good deal of opinion, that the cause of religion in England is entirely or largely bound up with the maintenance of the Establishment. About that I will only say this much. It is obviously a good thing for the State to have an Established Church. It is impossible to say in a sentence or two whether or not it would on the whole be a good thing for the Church of England to be disestablished, though clearly it would have many benefits. But it is perfectly impossible to maintain, with the evidence of the New Testament and of Church History, past and contemporary, before our eyes, that the existence and well-being of the Christian Church and the Christian religion

depend upon Establishment. And if the Church, rightly or wrongly, ever becomes disestablished, or rather, to put it more correctly, the State becomes disecclesiasticized, torn from the protecting arms of Mother Church, we shall not hear so much about the National Church. The phrase itself is Christian enough. S. Paul witnessed and assisted at the planting of many National Churches. But as used at present it is liable to have an Erastian ring, and apart from Church-Establishment it would lose some of its popularity. The question whether churchmanship is inherited by birth or baptism will indeed remain. The value and necessity of Baptism is to some extent discussed in the eighth chapter, but it is worth while to say at this point that "National Church" catchwords, whether they be insolently Erastian or ignorantly insular, are not the last word in religion. The Christian faith and the Christian Church are Catholic—that is, universal. The Church of England is at liberty to permit her clergy to be married and to relax (by implication) the rule of obligatory confession, to issue a Prayer-Book, a Catechism and Articles, to promulgate, in fact, regulations which have the nature of byelaws. But the Creed, the Sacraments, the Bible, and the Ministry are things which belong to a larger entity than any particular or National Church. They are the property of the whole Body of Christ.

I am myself the servant of a little Mission Church in Battersea. We are there driven by absolute necessity to forego many of the forms of worship which appeal to those who happen to have some

historical education or antiquarian tastes. The old office-hymns and the more curly specimens of plain-song music are ruled out, because people would not like them. The services and sermons must, if possible, be interesting and even homely. But just because it is a plain Mission Church with red brick walls, with few memorials and no great cloud of witnesses such as cling round the ancient stones of the Abbey of S. Peter, it is all the more vital to remind ourselves by word and deed, by prayers for unity and loyalty to universal things, that we are a part of the world-wide Church of Christ.

And not world-wide only, but time-long. I write these words in November, a month of many memories, a month that kindles brave resolutions and touches tender hearts. At this time we think at the Caius Mission, in our human, homely and yet Catholic way, of many a good soul who has now passed either to another parish or to another world. And not only of the Souls that we have known. For, after all, who were the real founders of this Gonville and Caius College Mission? Why, Edmund Gonville, Rector of Terrington, in Norfolk, in 1348, and "that great and generous person, John Caius, Doctor in Physic, President of the College of Physicians in London," in 1557. And who were their spiritual ancestors? Augustine of Canterbury, Justus of Rochester, and Mellitus of London, thirteen hundred years ago. And the Faith that strengthened them and strengthens us was also the Faith of Ambrose and Athanasius, Jerome and Origen, Leo

and Chrysostom, the Faith of Antioch and Alexandria, of early Rome and primitive Jerusalem, the Faith of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb. What is our *Gloria in excelsis?* The witness of S. John Baptist, set to music by the angels who greeted the Nativity. Our Church sings every day after the First Lesson at Evening Prayer the Song of the Mother of the Lord, and after the Second the vesper-hymn of the old man who held Jesus in his arms. The long process of liturgical development which has given us our Baptismal Order and our Prayer of Consecration began in the river Jordan and the Upper Room. As S. Paul says to the too national Church of Corinth, "What? was it from you that the Word of God went forth? Or came it unto you alone?" The Incarnation is not an event that took place in London, and the Catholic Church is wider than the English nationality or the British Empire, or the Anglo-Saxon race. An English parson can say his Matins as he crosses the Equator by the Cape to Cairo railway, but he is living on the spiritual hospitality of the Church of Africa, that strong, young province of the Catholic Church of Christ.

CHAPTER VII

THE BATTLE OF FLOWERS

THE second *desideratum*, if the Church who bore you is to bear you still, is that she must be interesting. When I remember the patient faces that I have often seen from the pulpit, the claim seems over-bold. When I recall the patient argument of books on the Church that are worth ten of this, it seems too trivial. Yet it is vital, and because many will think there is no case, the case must be laboured at some length.

Whenever, in a theological or ecclesiastical connection, there crops up the metaphor of new wine, whenever, for instance, it is said that life is coursing like new wine through the veins of the Church, there is always a handful of austere students who hail the figure with a real passion of intellectual welcome, and as a rule mistake its meaning. "Ah, yes," they say, "you mean the new wine of critical enquiry which is bursting the bottles of effete tradition. You mean the vintage born on the banks of German rivers, matured in Berlin and Göttingen, which at last has freed the British workman from the monstrous tyranny of the Church of England clergyman." But, setting aside the question whether I should ever mean anything so extravagantly untrue, setting aside a partial wish that parish work might sometimes

be conducted on such promising and easy lines as these, I do not now mean anything of the kind. I refer rather to the wild intoxication of the Day of Pentecost. How it staggered the prim Pharisees and the cruel Sadducees! How they shook their sober sides with mocking laughter! Such intolerable vulgarity! For the one thing that stirs the inane pomposity of certain anti-Christian attitudes is to laugh, not with, but at religion. And mingled with this mockery there was a note of grave reproach. This reeling madness! Unworthy of the severe traditions of the Law! For the one thing that really irritates a barren orthodoxy is to find its own premisses pushed to a human and extreme conclusion. A possible dim recollection of a fantastic prophet who had anticipated a Baptism of fire and spirit, did not help matters much. It might explain, but it could hardly justify such conduct. And besides, ill-timed hilarity like this was not sincere. It was the response of a low type of organism to some artificial stimulus. The men were drunk.

And yet this wildness, so startling to the sober citizen, is a true note of Christianity. Brass bands and scarlet jerseys, copes, gargoyles, processions and Church-ales, crude symbolism and noisy cymbals, all combine to bring out its essential tone. The Church is wild and must be wild. Wherever and whenever it has failed, it was because it was not wild enough. The Reformation spirit and the nineteenth-century spirit of enquiry produced great upheavals and stirred and stimulated and upset millions of minds. Why, therefore, be surprised to

hear that the movement of Pentecost exhibited phenomena which were mistaken for intoxication? After all, the movement of Pentecost has been the genesis and inspiration of most movements since. If this be doubted, if it seem the smug triumph of a complacent clericalism, that refuses to admit defeat, to claim dead anti-Christians as a product of the Christian *geist*, a single instance will suffice. It is surely the simple truth to say that Strauss, for example, was a protest against the tameness of the Church. If the Church had been wilder, Strauss would have been milder. The only Christian way of treating heretics is to beat them at their own game. Incidentally, this is, I suppose, the secret of the perilous joy of being a Roman Modernist.

Now it is gratifying to one who believes that mistaken Christians can nevertheless be Christians, to see that the presence of this primitive trait in members of communions other than his own is recognized and respected. A very slight acquaintance with serious studies in religious psychology or with the fiction which pleases because it reflects the popular mind, will show that Roman Catholics, Friends, "Auld Lichts" and "the people called Methodists," are being rightly credited with the possession of a sincere enthusiasm. They are respected partly because they are poor, or few, or narrow-minded, or whatever else they are, but mainly by virtue of their sublime intoxication. They are reverenced with the reverence that was anciently paid to lunatics. They are under the special protection of the gods.

But there is one religious body in this country which is put by common consent in an altogether different class. It is the desperate aim of the writer to claim a share in this divine madness for the Established Church. The Church of England, with all its Archdeacons upon its back, is "something rich and strange."

The Church of England claim to be romantic is met at the outset by the rival claims of Nonconformity. The Nonconformists are accustomed to describe themselves as the children of Freedom, a struggling, persecuted minority. As a matter of fact they are a comfortable and well-established community. Their claim to picturesqueness, based on recollections of old Covenanting days, is countered by an appeal to facts. Let any candid person close his eyes and think of a Nonconformist. Does not the picture undeniably and overwhelmingly suggest a middle-aged man of sufficient means, strong in the power of his will, strict in the manner of his life, stout in the shape of his body, and sentimental in the colour of his soul. The notes of the community are strength and honesty and unction; and very good notes they are. There is no doubt that their eye is single and their view of life is straight. The only thing is that it cannot by any stretch be called artistic. The artistic eye has been plucked out and cast away. They are the teetotalers of Christendom. They observe that "colour and pageantry," to use a phrase of Mr. F. C. Kempson, is a thing capable of abuse, so they determine to do without it.

This is partly principle and partly prejudice. It is partly a reasoned belief that outward acts of ceremonial and distinctive dress of ministers—over and above the bare minimum involved in any organized gathering for the purpose of divine worship—are a hindrance and not a help, and it is partly an unreasoning prejudice which feels that things like candles and scarlet cassocks really do bring into this country the political power of the Pope. Time has done much, and will do more, to establish the groundlessness of these fears. The prejudice will disappear. It will be seen that some of the suspected usages are employed solely because they brighten the worship of people whose lives are dull and grey. There is no thought whatever, conscious or subconscious, of Rome. Others, it is true, are employed because it is wished to emphasize the position of the Church of England as part of the Catholic Church. There is therefore an inclusive reference to the Church of Rome. Eucharistic vestments, for example, are used because all through the Church, East and West, there has been for many centuries a customary uniform for the Breaking of the Bread. But there is no imitation of the distinctive theology or politics of the Roman Church. To those who say, "But the Mass is Roman," we reply, "Even the word connotes nothing distinctively Roman, and the thing is no more the peculiar property of Rome than Baptism or the Bible." And, as a fact, I do not hesitate to say that in parishes where such vestments are used, the non-Papal theory of the Church of England is more clearly and

intelligently understood than anywhere else. Why? Because popular suspicions and their own needs have forced the people of such parishes to consider the issue. The sea-coast population of an island learn from their daily experience, as well as by occasional wrecks, the meaning of insularity. And they also learn that their neighbours across the water are human beings like themselves. The inland population is in great danger of misunderstanding the situation, but the coast-dweller knows that *Oceanus* is both *dissociabilis* and *associabilis*.

The principle is, of course, worthy of all possible respect. There is, indeed, some prejudice intermingled with it. Nonconformists say, "We like a simple service." But apart from prejudice it would be admitted that to look at a crucifix is a more simple act than to listen to a sermon on the Atonement, or that, to take a broader issue, a sermon is more complicated than a Sacrament. But it is largely a principle. Some people have made up their mind that their religion is to be as nearly as possible mental only. They are, as I say, total abstainers from ceremonial in any form. Others have joined the semi-teetotal Pledge Association, or the No Drinks Between Meals Movement. They consent to have a choir, and a service that is more or less liturgical, but certain private acts of devotion, like making the sign of the Cross, which are, of course, in any case quite optional, are deprecated. Now, the Church of England admits that *symposia* require regulating. Hence the rubrics, and to some extent the provision that the Lord's Supper—the chief

occasion of ceremonial—shall be celebrated in the morning when heads are clear and there is less danger of false sentiment. But personal acts are left to every man's devotion. A self-denying ordinance is always to be respected. There are cases in which, as Dr. Gore says, a safe life is better than a complete one, but there is surely no question which method is more interesting. If food be life, yet wine is a *vivendi causa* which it were a mistake to lose. And if the Church of England can learn, as Dolling did, from the Salvation Army: if we can surround the enthusiasm of the Penitent-form with the security of a Sacrament: if we can add the fervent "Amen" of Methodism to the solemnity of the Prayer of Consecration in the Eucharist, why then indeed we shall be building a City of God, a New Jerusalem, into which Thomas à Kempis and John Bunyan, Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Baxter, Liddon and Spurgeon, Arthur Stanton and Joseph Parker, will "bring their honour and glory." I am not entering upon a trial of strength. It is hardly for us to organize comparisons of fruits, but in so far as a battle of flowers may symbolize the issue, there is no question where the superiority lies. One party has definitely declined to compete.

The Christian year is another glory of the Church. So deeply woven into our inherited national life that it is impossible to pay the quarter's rent without recognizing the Communion of Saints, it is still almost a dead letter to Non-comformity. Attempts to find a substitute in Choir Festivals and Sunday School Anniversaries,

and the growing observance of Christmas, Good Friday and Easter, point the way to better things. No educated person doubts the advantage of possessing and visiting historic monuments like Westminster Abbey and Westminster Hall. No educated Christian ought to doubt the advantage of possessing and using Festivals like Michaelmas and All Saints' Day. Or, to take two slightly more controversial examples (the second of which in the Church of England stands at a lower level of authority), the observance or at least the recollection of days like Lady Day and All Souls' Day, give a tenderness and largeness to Christian life and thought which it would be hard to obtain in any other way. It is not fitting in this connection to speak of the deeper and more tragic interest of Holy Week and Good Friday, or the sublime happiness of a Churchman's Easter. It would take too long to enter on the philosophic defence of Fasts and Vigils, the psychological value of an ordered year, but those who are content to be without such things, miss much of the romance of Christianity.

Extempore prayer is believed to be more interesting than a liturgy. It has an interest, but it is the interest which attaches to a Kaiser or a Czar. A potentate whose lightest word determines the privilege of listening multitudes is indeed a picturesque, commanding figure. But most of us prefer democracy. Some are still faithful to aristocracy, where it may be had. Well, liturgical prayers combine the excellences of both. Superbly democratic, because they are the common prayers of

millions of the living and millions of the dead; superbly aristocratic, because they enlist the priceless aid of masters like Leo and Chrysostom and Cranmer. On the one side are heard the clear accents of a monarch, strong in the consciousness of his position and trained from boyhood to speak in the place of others, and on the other, the murmur of many voices, humbly whispering the words of the real great masters.

The fact that liturgical prayer is so difficult that no one can ever do it properly does not rob it of its romance. Extempore prayer is a concession to the weakness of human nature, but it is more of an adventure to attempt by means of symbolism to make easier a difficult crusade than to give up the struggle. If you attempt to pray the prayers of saints, your almost inevitable failure produces a wholesome humility, and a rare, slight measure of success produces the peace of God, which passes understanding. And if sinners combine to pray in their own words, some fundamental elements of human nature are crudely and truthfully expressed. But if you retain an expert to pray for you and he does it well, it must be extremely hard to refrain from mental self-congratulation on the soundness of your investment.

This leads to the general subject of the ministry and sacraments. God forbid that I should dare to say that Nonconformist ministers are not filled with the Holy Ghost[1] and divinely called to preach.

[1] As I am correcting the proofs of these pages I read in the *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1912, in a review (p. 741) of Mr.

The fact that they do preach to the edification of a large part of Christendom is evidence enough. But there is no romance in that. It is like asserting that the good are good, or that a captain who brings his vessel through a storm is a competent navigator. It is far more thrilling to hold that any one is qualified to consecrate the Eucharist who has been ordained. The grave advisers of the Prince in Cinderella no doubt told him that it was a rash thing to promise that the first person who had a foot small enough to fit the shoe would be made Princess, but the Prince took the risk and it came out all right. Of course the fairy-tale is based on a profound Theodicy, or doctrine of the Divine Government of the world, but then so is the Church of England. The weakness of the "strong man theory" is that strength is not always recognizable at first by men. God alone knows who is strong, and God alone knows what else is wanted besides strength. So after all it is Peter who is surnamed The Rock: it is Mary Magdalen who first sees the Risen Christ.

Lastly, the Church of England sacramental doctrine is capable of being considered from this

Skrine's *Creed and the Creeds*, "when he says that his own church is 'Christendom's best magnet to re-unite the Churches,' we feel that he is claiming too much. For until she becomes more tolerant, and will admit that the Holy Spirit is present in other communions besides her own, this cannot be allowed." Can witness to such an obvious truth be called an admission? The word is not my choice, but if it is going to be used, I will say that I have never in my life felt, or found among any of my friends, the slightest difficulty in making this admission.

point of view. Where had the people been first thing that morning, who after breakfast went out on crusades and chivalrous adventures and then wove beside the evening fire the fairy-tales which we have almost forgotten? Why, to hear Mass in Church. I dare not pretend to appraise in terms of mere interest the devotion of a communicant. But the principle of the thing is surely romance itself. There is the element of magic: the common food, or the water of the nearest stream, can be touched with a mysterious uniqueness: the meal of brothers can be joined by angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven, and lifted till the very Lord Who made us is known of us in the breaking of the bread. It consecrates, as no theology or sermon could, the magic of the earth, the beauty and value of the wheat, the water and the grapes. And yet it is not altogether magic: not a spell, but a reasonable, human thing. For the life so poured into the souls of Christian people is not the incommunicable life of a distant, alien Superiority but of God Incarnate, of the Poor Man of Nazareth, Who relies, in this His supreme appeal, on nothing but His sheer Humanity.

So much for the things that divide us from our Nonconformist friends. What of the "road to Rome"? Have we a better road? Can the *via media* compare in picturesqueness with the *via Mediterranea?* Is "our rough island story" really as interesting and as dramatic as the splendid tale of Rome? Is the Church of the white pontiff and

the red prince-cardinals, of Hildebrand and Francis, the Church of Brittany and Ireland, of Philip Neri and the Curé d'Ars, the Church which Newman was compelled to join and of which Tyrrell did not despair, to yield her acknowledged bays in the field of high romance to the Church of England? For, remember, the question is not here of the truth of our religion, but its beauty; its sweetness, not its light. Whether you consider the gorgeous pageantry of S. Peter's, or the limping pilgrims on the way to Lourdes, the Church of Rome seems unapproachable. What have we to set beside all this gold and scarlet, or these pious rags?

Omitting deeper questions like alleged schism or unorthodoxy or invalidity of sacraments, if I admit that our ritualism is either an antiquarian revival or a theft, that our popular superstitions are uninteresting, that we cannot compel our Deans and Canons to believe their own religion, that our Bishops are appointed by the Premier, that our Prayer-book is an Act of Parliament, that our clergymen are married and that their symbol is an umbrella, it will be felt, I think, that I have touched on a good many of our more prosaic features.

It is simple to invent a stage-bishop or a comic curate, and then to laugh at him. It is easy to make little hits, as Father Benson does, at ponderous rectors and unspiritual squires, or to poke fun at Matins on the Continent. But it was hardly necessary. Every one knows that, although Blazer Bumstead has replaced the Rev. Robert Spalding,

even Blazer is sometimes more the English gentleman than the Christian saint. Every one knows that the Alpine guides kneeling at the village Mass are more picturesque than the chaplain's wife accompanying the *Gloria Patri* on the harmonium, and Percy pulling up his socks as he sits down to hear the long First Lesson about Ahab. We are amused, but not much impressed by these "glimpses into the obvious." And besides, comparisons are valueless without a standard. Everything depends on what you want. The Roman Church is fascinating as the windows of Mr. Selfridge are fascinating. And they are, admittedly, compelling. They arrest the passer-by. They are replete with finished articles, arranged with consummate skill. The Church of England has the fierce beauty of a blacksmith's shop. To live in the Roman Church must be rather like living in a spiritual Hotel Cecil, compassed about with every luxury, and with some one else to do the work. Some people like living in hotels. It saves trouble. But life in the Church of England has all the charming irregularity of life at home. The cooking is not always good. The meals are late. The household arrangements are complicated by the kindred problems of followers in the kitchen and evenings-out. If you want to get up very early in the morning, you have to wake yourself with an alarum. There is no Boots, except at Brighton. Your uncle (from the Athenæum) plagues you with ridiculous advice on domestic economy. And sometimes the baby cries. But on the whole it is

less boring. It may have been silly of Kipps to be so defeated by the "royal grandeur of the Royal Grand Hotel," but in the main the English verdict is that there is a good deal to be said for Kipps.

It was agonizing for Newman to be in the van of the Oxford Movement and then to go over to Rome. But it was even more grandly terrible to be in the van of the Oxford Movement and not to go over to Rome. No doubt the English Romanists have something of the joy of battle. A spirited minority always has. But we are possessed by the more exhilarating, more desperate happiness of martyrdom. We are misunderstood by the members of our own family. We are wounded in the house of our friends. Our brethren believe not in us. Whereas the Roman Church fights very gallantly against her enemies, we are facing far more fearful odds. We have to fight against ourselves.

The truth is that whatever religious body is established in this country, the Church of England is not. It may be so described on the stone tables of the Statute of Provisors or the Acts of Uniformity, but the religion established in the fleshy tables of the hearts of the English people is undenominationalism. The standard of comparison adopted in the House of Commons, that joint-product of our Elementary Education and our Great Public Schools, is the flat, dead level of the sea. It is the standard of the veriest Cook's tourist. Nothing less than two thousand metres is allowed to count. Roman Catholicism is established, because our

legislators have heard of the Alps. "Our common Christianity" is established, because the sea is undeniable (except in Switzerland). But the up and down of the home counties, the rocks of Cornwall, the wildness of Merioneth, the grim peak-country, the Malvern hills and the chalk-cliffs, the orchards and the hops, the lakes and the moors and the fells and the dales, all this rich and varied beauty is very likely catalogued in blue-books and put away in the cupboards of Committee-rooms, but it is only known to a few enthusiasts. The headquarters of the Roman Church is a well-known and well-organized bureau, where, as in Ludgate Circus, men may arrange a pleasant, irresponsible holiday in the high Swiss hotels. The Church of England is a crusade.

And, therefore, following the example of Mr. G. K. Chesterton, who reminds us that the most daring adventure in the world is to climb over the wall into the next garden, and of the Great Western Railway, which presses the claims of the English Riviera, I brandish in the face of an astonished public this even bolder and more startling discovery. There is a mysterious movement in our midst, with a wild worship and a fantastic creed, which has hitherto been strangely overlooked. Very few have ever heard of it. It is called the Church of England.

This curious paradox, of the almost incredible obscurity which enwraps what is still sometimes called the National Church, is not invalidated by the admission that it exists in every place. Its

existence is recognized and forgotten as men, when they walk, subconsciously postulate the existence of the pavement. No one denies that there are front doors to houses, brass-plates in Harley Street, and lamp-posts everywhere. But it is the scarlet pillar-box and the big hotel which catch the eye.

Let any one who is impressed by the crowded Roman Churches of Brompton, or the Borough, or Arundel, or Salford, or Preston remember this pregnant fact, that hotels are built where there is a demand for them. In West London. In Switzerland. At Monte Carlo. But there are families in every hamlet. The Church of England has a parish everywhere. She preaches whether they will hear or whether they will forbear. What if her accent is Elizabethan? What if she is still struggling with Hanoverian trammels? The captive lion is tame and uninteresting enough. But when the lion has begun to break the bars and is half-way out of the cage, the visitors will have a very brisk and stimulating time.

And even now the Mothers' Meetings of the poor, the suburban Building Fund, the heroism of sometimes unattractive District Visitors, the Confirmation candidates, the Easter Services, the Guilds of the faithful, the street-processions, the secret prayers of the Bishop who is charged with the spiritual oversight of three million souls, the Mission sermon and the "after-meeting," even the "Dearly-beloved" Matins of the rich West End, all this contains a real and abundant life. What if

some like to express it at a Solemn Eucharist and others at a prayer-meeting? Assuming, as is not the case, that the High Celebration and the simple prayers are strict alternatives, what then, as S. Paul would say? Whether it were I or they, so God is worshipped in the Church of England.

And after all why should the poor old Rector not be married? And carry an umbrella? Why not? He often has to go out visiting in the rain. His wife sweetens many homes in the parish besides the Rectory. She makes him have less money, but not, I think, less manhood than if he lived alone. And the boys? Do I hear it said that they are a clerical caste, a menace to our English Christianity? To any one who has ever been to Oxford or Cambridge or Canada or South Africa, the idea is grotesque. It is even a little pathetic. For these boys are the mainstay of our rather undenominational Empire.

It is really very difficult to compare the Roman and the English Churches in any but this superficial way. There are mere fundamental differences, of course, theological and political. But the theological differences are mainly concerned with fibres of devotion too intimate to be discussed in this particular connection. And the political differences are largely the outcome of the difference between the Latin and the English character, which it is not necessary to discuss at all. But it is possible without offence and, I hope, without tediousness to take one or two examples. There is a practice, known in both

communions, of which the mention is sometimes avoided as unseemly, but is nevertheless entirely wholesome. I mean the practice of confession. It is a thing which ought to be discussed. In the Roman Church confession is an obligation. In the English Church it is a choice. Which is the more interesting? Which stimulates the spiritual circulation more? It is satisfactory to pay your income-tax, but it is much more stirring to make up your mind how much you are going to put in the plate. True, some people put in nothing. But that is their business. No doubt they have their reasons. As William James said of war, this is the good side of the Church of England; it calls for volunteers.

Again, the Roman confessor is a celibate. It is perhaps worth noting incidentally that even the beneficed clergy of the Church of England are not all married. But many are. And Mr. Lecky has remarked somewhere that it is a little difficult to take seriously "the pretentions of a married clergy." Indeed, apart from controversy, it is often said that a celibate priesthood can be trusted to hear the secrets of a soul. I should hope it could. I know a much more remarkable thing than that. Here is a married priest who hears hundreds of confessions. His wife knows nearly all the members of the congregation fairly well. She is herself a visitor and parish-worker. She understands the temptations of the people. She probably knows pretty well, as most of the congregation do, who goes to confession and who does not. She has

herself persuaded and encouraged not a few shrinking souls. And no one in that parish has ever suggested or is ever likely to suggest that the seal is broken. Which is the "stronger situation"?

In politics the difference is between a Papal and an episcopal constitution. The Roman Bishop is the local representative of the central authority; the English Bishops are heads of families. Life in communion with the Pope is more uniform; life in an English diocese has greater and more attractive possibilities. To avoid offence, let me take an impossible example. A ritualistic (and athletic) parson is inspired by the wish to make his teaching more pictorial. To illustrate the real meaning of Christian Science he stands on his head in church. This non-liturgical ceremony is deprecated by the Bishop, as well it may be. But in case his sporting instincts lead him to rebel, he is much more likely to gratify them by having a personal interview with the Bishop than by having a postal communication from the Pope.

Or, to take a more sensible positive example, the perplexed parson needs counsel and strength for the war. In one communion he is referred to section nine, sub-section ten of the ecclesiastical drill-book, issued with authority from the official press at Rome. The English Bishop has no elaborate drill-book, but he is perfectly acquainted with a little manual entitled, "The Kingdom of Christ, or Hints to a Bishop respecting the Principles, Constitution, and Ordinances of the

Catholic Church,"[1] and out of the fulness of his heart his mouth speaketh. Sometimes, like Bishop Walsham How, he even produces a sprightly little parable—

> "'May I? May I?' shyly blushing,
> Love-sick Damon sighs.
> 'No, Sir. No, Sir,' brightly flushing,
> Phyllis quick replies.
>
> "Silly Damon! had you *done it*,
> Saying not a word,
> You had ne'er, depend upon it,
> That refusal heard."[2]

There may be exceptions, but nearly all of us find in our Bishop a Father in God. We like it in the same way and for the same reasons as boys like having a father according to the flesh. It is better to live at home in your father's house than with the most conscientious guardian or in the best-conducted orphanage in the world. The Roman Bishop is after all only *in loco parentis*, an Archpriest whose orders are episcopal, a sort of consecrated Rural Dean. I trust I am not impugning either the piety or the human sympathy of the Roman Bishops when I suggest that their chief function is to repeat, "Thus saith the Pope."

> "Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,
> When there is in it but one only man."

[1] "Hints to a Quaker, respecting, etc.," is the sub-title of *The Kingdom of Christ*, by F. D. Maurice.

[2] An East London Vicar had asked the permission of Bishop Walsham How, then Bishop of Bedford, to commit some slight liturgical irregularity.—*Life and Letters of Bishop Walsham How*, p. 141.

And yet by a strange paradox it is the Roman Bishop who insists on being obeyed. Of the three possible *modi vivendi*, Grace, Law, and Anarchy, we prefer to live under Grace, and in all sympathy we are distressed to see how terribly often Law produces Anarchy. It is a common, sordid experience for one of the "hands" in a large firm to be harried by a tyrannical foreman. In smaller firms it does not often come, thank God, to having a row with the governor. But it would be more exciting if it did.

To take one last example, a good test of health and life is the power of adaptation. In religion there are limits to its exercise. For instance, the problem of how to adapt itself to Atheism is one which Christianity regards with imperfect sympathy. But at least we cannot help being cognizant of new ideas. How do Rome and England severally receive them?

There is something splendid about consistent indifference to novelty. There is even an element of romance. It *is* dashing to slam the door. There was a lady in Mr. Anthony Hope's *Quisanté*, who when told that her opinion was contradicted by the entire teaching of science, philosophy, and art, replied calmly, "So much the worse for the entire teaching of science, philosophy, and art." This is impressive. The obscurantism is conceived on a colossal scale, in the high, Roman style. But when you look into it, *semper eadem* is a dull motto after all. There is a sameness about the attitude involved which becomes wearying in time. It is

monotonous to slam all the doors in the house. As the Encyclical *Pascendi* did.

I know, of course, that there are many who think it hopelessly obscurantist to believe the Apostles' Creed. But anyhow it may be said without fear of contradiction that there do exist a number of Anglican theologians who are acquainted with the greater part of what is to be said against that Creed and nevertheless believe it. No doubt there are also plenty of well-read Roman Catholics. For instance, Abbot Butler in the *Hibbert Journal* (April, 1906, p. 482) spoke of himself as "one who during the past fifteen years has read with entire freedom the literature concerning the New Testament and Christian origins produced by the leading representatives of modern historical criticism; who has himself endeavoured to work according to the scientific methods of that school; and who through it all and after it all feels he can only be a Catholic." Abbot Butler's words are a happy description of the exact temper which I here venture to commend. The Church of England theologian is not the only person who walks bravely through the dark forest with his bag full of the family plate. Abbot Butler has had his adventures no doubt. And the Nonconformists have their heirlooms. But many of the Abbot's friends do not go very far into the forest, and some of the Nonconformists have very little in their bag. The Roman Catholic bears a charmed life. He is cased in triple steel. The New Theologian is not worth attacking. He is but a poor ghost himself. It is easy for the traveller to feel confidence if

he is lucky enough to have a magic breastplate, or if he is immaterial enough to have no breast. There is no credit in being jolly if the risk of loss is covered by insurance or if the diamonds are only paste.

The Church of England theologian goes out into the night alone, and crosses the forest with his faith in his hand. He has no charm, only a Blessing. He goes far enough to face the spectres, and he carries enough to escape the charge of *vacuus cantabit*. His pilgrimage presents the most moving and dramatic picture in the world. The plain citizen in danger; Gilpin on horseback. The ordinary mortal in almost overwhelming circumstances; Alice in Wonderland. For the real courage is that of the pilgrim who is frightened, but goes on. If I may be allowed to use an instance of a very small Gilpin on a monstrous horse, a prosaic little Alice among the thrills of a very frightful Wonderland, I have myself delivered lectures on the Doctrine of Original Sin. The memory of them is touched with a wild, unearthly beauty. It has a quality of mystical adventure, the desperate optimism of the tenderfoot on the prairie, the rustic in London, the train in the tunnel, the trawler in a gale.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRUE CHURCH

THE last great requirement, if a man is going to die in the Church where he was born, is that it should be true. This opens up the thorny question, nimbly avoided hitherto, "What is the Church?" A great many modern writers sharpen their wits and amuse their readers by allusions to the "nearly two hundred different sets of doctrines" which are being taught in the thousands of churches and chapels of England. Ridicule of this sort is very salutary for the preachers and the congregations, though I am sometimes uneasy about its effect on the joker's own soul. It occasionally smacks a little of Pontius Pilate.[1] But it is wholesome for us. "Our unhappy divisions" constitute a standing reproach and a cruel handicap to Christendom. They are clean contrary to the mind of the Master and the ideal of the Church. Repentance, which is crucifixion, and the desire for unity, which is the state of mind that longs to "ascend and with Him continually to dwell," will alone repair the mischief. But at least the rent condition

[1] Not that I believe Pilate to have been really "jesting." His *Quid est veritas?* (of which, by the way, the anagram is *Est Vir Qui adest*) is rather the scornful *dictum* of one who despairs of truth and is indifferent to its pursuit.

of the seamless robe shows this much, that men have cared. Narrow-mindedness, that almost inevitable defect, is a channel through which the river races deep and swift. Heresy, if it be not too popular, is the child of a liberty still immature. The many venial instances of the mortal sin of schism are born of genuine, if short-sighted, zeal. The unpardonable sin of persecution is the fruit of a twisted but overmastering conviction.

Moreover, facetious reference to the two hundred different sets of doctrines are sometimes accompanied not only by a complete misapprehension of what Christianity is, but also by an alarming indifference to truth. For instance, the author of the phrase just quoted first of all suggests that some Sunday morning there should be laid aside "the rather greedy and selfish wish you have to profit your own soul by repeating that you are 'a miserable sinner,'" and then says, "God be praised, I haven't a theory to bless myself with, and as for pretending to elevate my fellow-creatures or to be any better than the rest of them, I hope I shall never do anything so mean and disagreeable. . . . I do not care a fig to which of these two hundred sects you belong, I do not care a fig about historical criticism upon the authenticity of sacred documents; I say that if there is only one honest intelligent doubter on the face of this planet, one man who with the strength of the reason given to him, as you will say, by this same power, calls in question the authority, or the reasonableness, or the righteousness of this supernatural scheme of yours, the whole of it is

condemned."[1] Angels and ministers of grace defend us! Shades of Origen and Hooker, Pascal and Butler, yes, and Celsus and Porphyry, Spencer and Huxley, what make you of this levity so flippant and unprincipled? Here is a distinguished man, a member of an honourable profession. His colleagues, at all events, in the noble and religious art of writing plays endeavour not merely to portray external life, but to suggest that there are in life spiritual principles, difficult it may be to ascertain and carry out, but at all events worthy of attention, and that whether or not it is able for the moment to prevail, yet there is truth, and truth is great. And he says, "God, I thank Thee that I have no theories; that I am not as other men or even as this curate." Could misunderstanding of Christianity and indifference to truth be more complete? Of course our friend is not really doing justice to himself, but if it were true it would be the despair of ignorant futility. What? The Doctrine of the Cross condemned because there is one complacent company-promoter who fails to understand it? The life of Jesus invalidated because the world contains one bully? The positive value of the Good Samaritan to be ruled out because one prosperous person has never been hungry or heart-broken? The Christian religion damned because one philosopher can admit no testimony but that of his own honourable and fastidious logic, or because there is one case of the disease of spiritual atrophy?

[1] Mr. Henry Arthur Jones in *Vox Clamantium*, pp. 234, 235, 239.

Who ever said that everybody was going to be converted? Did Christ convert Jerusalem? "When He beheld the city, He wept over it." "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." Thank God, the Cross has never pretended to be a cushion. We may be few, we may be ignorant, we may be foolish, we may even be divided amongst ourselves, but as the Lord liveth in whose sight we are, we believe that we have got our hands upon the truth. "These hands" shall be our witnesses. The scarred fingers and the lean arms shall testify that this Truth to which we cling as else drowning men is a hard and unlovely Cross.

I am betrayed into untimely, but not, I think, unpardonable warmth. I have deserted the immediate subject. We are considering not the truth of Christian doctrine, but the true Church. The subjects are not very far apart, but let us face the issue. What is the Church? If the evidence of the New Testament and the constant opinion of the Church about itself is worth a straw, there is one answer only. The Church consists of all those who have been baptized, not into this or that Communion, but into the Body of Christ. Of course there are various qualifications and reservations that must be made. There are various reminders that should be quoted from rigid Churchmen like S. Cyprian, S. Augustine, and Dr. Pusey[1] before the question can have been completely answered. But in the main the Church consists of the baptized. Listen to the wise words of the late Dr. Moberly.

[1] See note on p. 59.

"No sane Christian, be his definition of the Church what it may, dreams for a moment that every outward Churchman will be saved, and no one who is not an outward Churchman. *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* has lost none of its meaning to an intelligent Churchman; but it does not mean to him anything like this. He does not believe himself to be personally better than those whose Church privilege he knows to be far inferior to his own. He is sure indeed that, in outward practice and order, he is right and they—so far—are wrong. But those who are—so far—wrong in practice and inferior in privilege, may nevertheless be better in fact than himself and far fuller of the Spirit of Christ. If so, they will be found to be ultimately and essentially within the Church, which is the Body of Christ. The Churchman who is spiritual at all has no question of this. Only when he is asked (as he is in fact asked every day) to draw as conclusion from this, the principle that no outward order has intrinsic correctness or proper value of its own, he refuses utterly. That is just the wrong conclusion. There is a right in these matters, and these good people, though so much better personally than we are, are nevertheless explicitly wrong *in this*. The outward does not, here and now, at all perfectly correspond with the inward. Of course it does not. But the inward has a proper outward, and the true meaning and character and significance of its proper outward form is to be (though absolutely now it is not so) not only representative of, but

identical with, that inward meaning which it only exists to signify."[1]

As a general rule, Nicodemus has to be told, twice over if need be, that men cannot save themselves. It is significant that Nicodemus was a rich man, and a ruler. For the necessity of Baptism is one of the many points on which the heresies of the rich are corrected by the practice of the poor. "Rich folks" are apt to be independent, and parvenus are fond of trying to conceal their obscure parentage and the ignoble years spent in the small house behind the shop. Those who are rich enough to commence heretic are sometimes unwilling to admit their indebtedness to anything. But poor people very seldom fail to bring their children to be "done." Their view of the nature of the Sacrament is often mistaken; they minimize its meaning, and exaggerate its range. The rite is partly regarded as a harmless concession to tradition, and sometimes even as a hygienic prophylactic, but in the mother's mind at all events there is something of the devotion of a Hannah. And though it does not often of itself occur to them, both mother and father too almost invariably admit, if pressed, that they themselves were made Christians when they were baptized. But the rich heretic gives instructions for the Christening-cake to be provided in the same sort of way as Midas might send his first-born to the University. "Well, my boy, I suppose you'd better go. I don't suppose it'll do you much good. I doubt if it'll make you half the man that

[1] *Ministerial Priesthood*, pp. xxxi, xxxii.

business has made me. Look at me. I never had any education. When I was your age," etc., etc. Here is no Nicodemus seeking the friendly cover of the night. He patronizes the Saviour in the broad light of day.

It seems a far cry from Midas to the Brahman, but the caste-problem in India raises the very interesting question of possible dispensation, under special circumstances, from the necessity of Baptism. It is sometimes represented that the Brahman is Nicodemus, that India is rapidly becoming Christian at heart, and if only the stiff rule of Baptism could be relaxed the Gospel would have free course, and God would be glorified, and the rich meaning of the Incarnation widely and gloriously unfolded by a Christian India. A Christian India is, indeed, a glorious vision. It must have been part of the vision of the Church since the time of the first person who knew both India and the Gospel of S. John. It is not for me to pretend to understand the conditions and the needs of India, but if the Church is Catholic, it seems as if the Church must some day include India too. God forbid, as I said before, that our vision should include young India learning the jargon of modern English Churchmanship and describing his fellow-Christians as "spikes" or "Prots." But it does seem to mean that Baptism, the Former Sacrament of the Gospel and the unbroken practice of the entire Church, is a thing with which not even India can dispense. After all, Christianity is not case-law. It does not consist of a series of decisions of

hard cases, each judged in isolation on its separate, individual merits, with constant recommendations to mercy on the plea of extenuating circumstances. The only way for those who have to deal with applicants for charitable relief, or indeed for any one who has to deal with any one, parents with children, policemen with the public, doctors with patients, politicians with affairs and the electorate —I don't say it is always done—but the only satisfactory way is to be armed, beforehand, by invention, or acquisition, or inheritance, with a principle, and then to stick to it. The Church has inherited the Catholic principle of the necessity of Baptism, and has proved its value by experience.

For what is the inner meaning of Baptism? The soul of the unbaptized person is, as far as we know, in the position of one who was alive on earth before the time of Christ. Now, I have not the least intention of suggesting that he will inevitably be damned. If I did, he might reasonably retort that to share hell with Plato and Virgil would be a not unpleasant thing. Moreover, just as it is not to be supposed that God is without the means of getting over the difficulty of time, just as, in other words, the Atonement is an Eternal State, and it is not impossible for Plato to be brought under the healing shadow of the Cross, so it is not to be supposed that God has not His own ways of getting over individual cases of difficulty of another kind. At the same time, we are not meant to create difficulties for the purpose of finding out if God can deal with them. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord

thy God. Any one may be excused for being deaf, but it is wrong to pretend not to hear.

The case, then, is this. The Church has received no information to the effect that Baptism is only one of many entrances. As far as we know it is the only one. The soul at Baptism puts on Christ. Belief in Baptism involves the unpopular admission that we are not self-sufficient: that our nature contains elements of weakness and wrong: that it is necessary to seek admission to a definite communion, and to receive a salvation which is from above.[1]

I cannot pursue the subject further. I cannot enter here upon the technical case for Baptism, any more than I can discuss the necessity of the Episcopate, the reasonableness of Confirmation, or the validity of English orders, the case for Apostolic Succession or against Papal jurisdiction in Great Britain. I will only say that the Church of England regards her Sacraments as realities, but not as magic charms. "I am a firm believer in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. I deliberately call it a Sacrament, as being neither a magical ceremony, nor merely

[1] *Lux Mundi.* Essay ix. "All are accepted who will submit themselves to Baptism, *i.e.* all who recognize the element of evil and of weakness in their own life, who are willing to die to it and receive fresh life and strength from the Risen Lord, and to submit their life to His discipline. That is the Church as presented to us in the New Testament. Metaphor after metaphor is lavished upon it by our Lord and by S. Paul in order to make clear the conception of it. He is the Vine. . . . The Church is a household. . . . It is a family. . . . It is the Body of Christ. . . . It is God's Temple. . . . It is the Bride of Christ."

a decent form with no particular meaning."[1] So the Church of England asserts that Baptism, with its forgiving and regenerating effect, is a real and indispensable equipment. But, at the same time, it is conditional. It assumes conditions. It is dependent—not for its reality, but for its effect—upon the conditions of faith and repentance, as vouched for in the case of infants by the sponsors, and upon the assurance of a Christian education which shall supervene upon the initial regeneration so "that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning."

Further than this it is not possible to go into technicalities. It is quite frequently enough for the Englishman who has been baptized in infancy to believe that he has been "truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Order of this Church of England," to the status of a layman.

But for those who have leisure and ability, for those who have become unsettled, and, above all, for those who are proposing to pass from one Communion to another, the evidence must be rigorously examined. We, on our part, say to all possible new-comers, "The point is—is it true? Do not come over from Rome, because you like English services or dislike paper flowers, or from Nonconformity because you enjoy Evensong, or have moved to Balham Park. Is it true?" To any of our brothers who may be growing restless we say, "Do you believe that a Christian must be in communion with the Pope, or that Establishment or the Epis-

[1] J. H. F. Peile, *The Reproach of the Gospel*, p. 186.

copate is really fatal to religion, or that the doctrine of the Eucharist is an impossible and pernicious thing? Is Rome essential? Is Geneva or the City Temple true? If it is, then go, and may the Lord be with you."

And to those who find that doubts increase, while faith decreases, who are abandoning, sadly or cheerfully, the habits and convictions of a religious youth, and watching, with whatever eyes, the apparent setting of the sun which warmed and cheered them in the morning of their life, we say, "Is it really false? Is the Eternal also the Unknowable? Though you believe not Moses and the prophets, can you not recognize One rising from the dead? Is Jesus only Jesus? Is the Church a quite arid desert, an unsaving hospital, a barren school? Does loyalty forbid you to hail the Spirit whereby you labour to rule your life and thought as God the Holy Ghost? Is it false? Is the great Companion really dead? Are the young men and maidens who went forth with you a generation back, and bore what seemed to all of you good seed for the harvest of a world's redemption, are they all the pitiful victims of a visionary Gospel and a misbegotten hope, the straggling survivors of a wrong Crusade? Is it false? Then, indeed, the night has come, and whether you meet it with fear or welcome, whether you are sick with longing for the day's return, or whether you gird yourself to pursue your austere studies through the silent hours, when plain people are happily asleep, the night descends upon you, and we can but pray that Loving Power to be with you

'in the night,
Who made the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone.'"

Devoted Churchpeople sometimes talk more of the Church than of Christ. It is recorded that Miss Charlotte Yonge was occasionally thought to be too "churchy." Setting aside real cases of mere ecclesiasticism, of which no one could possibly accuse Miss Yonge, there are two reasons for this apparent lack of spirituality. One is reserve. Lay Churchmen are often shy of using the sacred name. In the same way they talk of "staying," or "the early service"; they are in great (if unconscious) need of some plain word without too much meaning, a word like "Mass," which they could use without embarrassment in public. And the other is their real belief that the Church is Christ. Some say, "The Bible is my religion." This is a mistake. Some say, "Christ is the religion of Christians." This is true, but if that is all you ever say, thousands of English people will go down to their graves without ever discovering that Christ includes the Church, that Christ's Body is essentially a part of Christ. If you say, "The Church is my religion," it sounds so narrow, so un-English, that people are sure to be puzzled and offended. They ask you what you mean, and you then have an opportunity of explaining that the Church is the place where you find Christ. "And it came to pass after three days that they found Him in the Temple."

And so before you allow yourself to be confirmed in your allegiance to the Church your Mother, you

must know whether she is indeed a teacher of God's truth. She must be a province of the Spirit, a home of goodness, established, not necessarily by law—that is a small and non-essential thing—but upon the better and surer foundations of peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety. And this is where the Church seems sometimes, to some of her devoted sons, a stammering and tongue-tied mother. God forbid that she should bind herself irrevocably to the chariot-wheel of any political party. It is not likely that she will ever have a united voice on Suffrage problems, or the best methods of Licensing Reform. But many of us are waiting and longing for an inspiring unity on questions where peace and happiness and justice are involved. It is a bitter memory that the meeting of the 1911 Church Congress, at which an ex-ambassador gave his matured views on the duty of the Church in regard to international peace, was attended by a handful of Churchpeople. It is the humiliating fact that proposals by which the happiness of millions would be affected, like the present proposals for Poor Law Reform, do not receive the earnest consideration of either clergy or laity as a whole. It is the sad truth that a fierce demand for industrial justice is not our loudest and most characteristic cry. I am not suggesting that the Church as a whole should say that war is always wrong, that the Majority or Minority Poor Law Report is perfect, or that she should take the part of men against masters, masters against men, but only that she should first and foremost be the Church of

Peace and of the poor, the champion of good-will and the under-dog. And by the under-dog I do not mean particularly the skilled workmen who are members of Trade-Unions, but rather the governess, the clerk, the shopman, the unskilled or casual labourer, and the child.

The theory of the Church is true and sound. The Church Catechism is all right, and it is meant to be taught to all children, even the children of the rich. The Sacraments are all right, and so is the general Confession. The Magnificat is all right; perhaps it even lays an excessive emphasis on the Divine discomfiture of Dives. The "duties" cover pride and covetousness, as well as burglary and drunkenness. The real constitutional conscience of the Church of England is firmly set in the way of peace and justice. And thousands of individual Churchmen, some even in the black days when Lord Shaftesbury said, "The clergy are all against me," have lifted up brave voices, not only in the Litany, but at Shareholders' Meetings, for those who are desolate and oppressed. We are entitled to claim the righteous indignation of a Gladstone, which flamed out whenever moral issues were involved, as a result of Churchmanship. We can point to preachers of fearless righteousness like Maurice, Kingsley, Ludlow, Westcott, Talbot, Gore, and Holland. We have a glorious roll of educationalists. Much of the patient, sober, honest industry of England began with the teaching of the parson and the National School. The Church of England has always been sound on marriage

and the family, and the gradual leavening of public opinion on sweating, luxury, fornication, gambling, drunkenness, adultery and pride, is due in part to her. But much remains to be accomplished ; and the Church of England, free as she is from the tinge of excessive Puritanism which both adorns and spoils the magnificent conscience of Nonconformity, free from the pious lethargy which sometimes enfeebles the social attitude of Roman Catholics, with her unrivalled opportunities of touching the national life at the critical times of infancy, childhood, puberty, marriage, sickness, death, should be the protagonist in the coming Armageddon against principalities and powers of darkness, whom she is challenged by the march of circumstances to face, and armed by her commission and constitution to overcome.

There must be, then, in the hearts of loyal Churchmen the conviction that the Church means strongly and means well. We do not want recruits, because our loaves are larger, or our fishes have more curly tails, but only because we are believed to be dispensers of the Living Bread. We should take joyfully the spoiling of the Universities and the decimation of our ranks, if it were at the call of conscience. The question to be faced is this—Is the Church of England a true province of the Spirit ? Are her Sacraments real things ? Is Confirmation a friendly pat on the child's head by a fatherly old man, or a means of grace ? Is the Lord's Supper a bare memorial, or a point of contact with the Ascended Christ ? Have such words as these

—"Receive the Holy Ghost," "I baptize thee," "I absolve thee," any meaning? Does Baptism regenerate? Does Ordination help me to become a man of God? Is the Lord's Supper the food of truth and honesty? does it strengthen and confirm me in all goodness, and bring me to everlasting life?

There is a popular impression that the Spirit is more likely to work in an irregular and fitful way than on a settled plan. This is surely due to an imperfect apprehension of the Personality of God. Belief in the liberty of God to adjust His methods to varying or distorted circumstances, to prevent the mistakes of His children from being fatal (*Deus non alligatur sacramentis suis*), does not preclude us from acknowledging that there are normal means and "covenanted mercies." And, after all, is Hallelujah really more spiritual than *Gloria in excelsis?* Is any sermon as Evangelical as Baptism? Is a weekly prayer-meeting more Christlike than a daily Eucharist? Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God the Holy Ghost should gather up His gifts and graces and make a definite offer of them all at Confirmation? What are the true corollaries of belief in the faithfulness of God? I remember reading in a novel of a lady who complained, plausibly enough, that she could not command the spirit of worship with mathematical regularity precisely at eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. I hold no brief for eleven o'clock, but that the answer to the complaint is simple: "Perhaps not, but anyhow God can."

"This is the time when I must pray,
Because to pray I know not how,
For I am near despair to-day;
My only hope, O Lord, art Thou.

"This is the day which Thou didst know
Was coming on me, when Thy love
Cheered and refreshed me long ago,
And gave a glimpse of joys above.

"This is the day and this the hour,
This moment have I need of Thee—
Now, when I feel the bad, dark power,
That seems almost too strong for me.

"For while I call it dark and bad,
And use the words which Thou hast given,
I all but feel I should be glad
To think there were no hell or heaven.

"I *all but* feel it; yet I cry
Out of the very darkest deep,
And know that I am heard on high,
And that Thy love my soul will keep.

"I cannot see Thee as Thou art,
I cannot feel, what feel I would,
I cannot now lift up my heart,
And yet I know that Thou art good.

"A broken and a contrite heart
I know Thou wilt not, Lord, despise,
Broken and crushed am I, Thou art,
My King, my Lord, my Sacrifice.

"O teach me, teach me how to pray,
Break my hard heart and loose my tongue:
And so for me in Heaven to-day
Shall songs of praise, dear Lord, be sung."[1]

The Church of England endeavours to steer between chaotic and mechanical religion. There

[1] V. S. S. Coles.

are prophets as well as priests, and yet the spirits of the prophets are to be held in reasonable control. There are Readers and Evangelists, Church Councils, parochial, decanal, diocesan, provincial, and yet Ordination is essential. There are such principles as those underlying Spiritual Communion; there is discretion granted in the case of such as are "ready and desirous to be confirmed;" yet "the Curates shall diligently from time to time . . . exhort their Parishioners to the often receiving of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ," and the godparents "are to take care that these children be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him." The Absolution given in the Church is a reality, but its effect is what you make it. There are conditions which must be fulfilled before the "effectual" Sacraments can, effectively, arrive. Some people think that the Church of England's position is damned because it is difficult, but the Church of England thinks that ease and peril are rightly named together by one who sings—

> "From sleep and from damnation
> Deliver us, good Lord."[1]

The Roman system is simplicity itself. But the world is not simple, science is complex, history is manifold, God fulfils Himself in many ways. Religions which find their *raison d'être* in protesting and non-conforming are simple, but God is positive. We believe in providing a religion that stimulates

[1] G. K. Chesterton, *The English Hymnal*, 562.

intelligence, but we never said, "If you can't understand my lecture, you are lost." We believe in making demands on the patience and perseverance of our people, but we never suggested that souls could be saved by either the Litany or Lent. We hold up in the Psalms of David a high model of devotion, but we do not expect all candidates for Paradise "to exhibit an acquaintance with the Revised Version." The Church Catechism says that two Sacraments are "generally necessary for salvation," but the Church Catechism contains in a dozen answers all that need be known about them.

On the other hand, we try to make our services plain to the unintelligent. We try, when we are not prevented, to sanctify human instincts about the condition of the departed, in a word, to Christianize the prevailing sentiment about death, by various services and observances; but we never suggested that the purchase of a penny candle would have a definite effect on the condition of a departed soul. We think that every mother in the world ought to aim at becoming more like Mary. But we never elevated a non-universal instinct into a necessary dogma of Immaculate Conception. We believe in doing rough Mission-work of an unconventional kind, but we do it not in the Town Hall, but in the Parish Church, and the end of it is Confirmation and Communion. Not that we undervalue the necessity of Christian conduct, but that we believe Communion to be the spring of conduct. Conversion is Christ, not clap-trap, nor even eloquence. The doors of the Church of England

are open freely to all comers, but the religion which she offers is not cheap. The intellectual "sweating" which prevails in the Roman Church has produced an attractive article (for those who like that kind of thing) at a wonderfully low price. The easy-payment system of listening to a sermon every week or so gives the appearance of a suite of furniture with startling suddenness. But the cheap article is veneer or shoddy, while the sticks got together on the "gradual" system are liable to go to pieces even before the non-payment of an instalment breaks up the borrowed home. The Truth of God is difficult to understand: the Cross of Christ is difficult to bear: liturgical worship is difficult to perform. The Church of England's position is adjusted, balanced, qualified. But that Church has never pretended that either the eye or the ear is the sole avenue to God.

The Church of England has a conscience and a mission. It is the English part of Christ's Catholic Body. It stands, like S. Nicolas de Bari in the Madonna degli Ansidei, in reverent contemplation of the recorded past; yet straining with wide eyes, like the Baptist in the same picture, to see the Christ that is to be; and at the same time not all unworthy to be compared to the Blessed Mother herself, who already magnifies the Lord, and rejoices in the possession of God her Saviour, and in a few years will speak and say, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." The Church of England is our Mother, and we must love her for being that. But the real condition of our allegiance is that we believe

her to be a Mother of the Lord. That is her real claim.

I cannot say that I have proved my point. I have hardly tried to prove it. My point is not one that can be proved in books. If I may change the application of some much-quoted words—

> "I cannot bid
> The world admit she stooped to heal
> My soul, as if in a thunder-peal,
> Where one heard noise, and one saw flame,
> I only knew she named my name."[1]

But I must know it, if I am to be happy in the Church of my inheritance. The white locks of travelled experience are good: the white wings of soaring imagination and romance are fair. But the best and greatest things are the white flame of purity and the white pearl of truth.

[1] R. Browning, *Christmas-Eve.*

CHAPTER IX

"THE WILL TO BELIEVE"

WHAT is the true standard of faith? How shall we decide what is to be called *de fide?* No question has ever been discussed more keenly in our own or any other age than this. To review it would be to write the history of Christianity. There is an endless series of answers which are only partially inconsistent with one another and only partially overlap. Here is a list of some of them.

The Apostolic recollection,
Tradition of the Apostolic teaching,
The Apostolic writings,
Consensus fidelium,
A General Council,
A generally-accepted Council,
The Old Testament,
Novelty,
The path of least resistance,
Plato,
The Fathers,
Political necessity,
The Pope,
Aristotle,
The Reforming Spirit,
Private Judgment,
Continuity,
The Epistle to the Galatians
A Royal Divorce,
Assemblies of Divines,

No Popery,
Ducal rapacity,
The Spanish Armada,
Nonconformity,
Intolerance,
Tolerance,
Indifference,
The Inner Light,
S. Paul's Epistles,
The Church,
The Privy Council,
Literary Criticism,
The Possession of a Rented Pew,
The Bible without Note or Comment,
The Book of Common Prayer,
Poetic Beauty,
Human Needs,
The Religious Value-judgment.

The order of this catalogue is roughly chronological, but it would over-tax my courage to pretend that all are true.

It will be convenient to begin with the most personal. Here the difficulty is that "the test which is practically the most convincing is the least producible in argument: it is what may be called the mystical or subjective test—what by inner and spiritual experience we feel we *know*."[1] Mysticism is incommunicable. There was once a meeting of a famous theological society at which the distinguished reader of a paper on the Inner Light was unable to answer the question, "But if a man says that he has not this knowledge of God, what can you do for him?" Obviously, there is

[1] This sentence is a quotation, but I am unable to recall its source.

no answer. He can do nothing. The mystic hugs his own religion with a delicious sense of privilege, but it is idle to expect him to preach at the street-corner. Quietism has no Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; no mission-hymns; not even any clergymen.

But a body of mystics, organized, consistent, and old-established, are better off. Church-mystics have at the back of them the Creed and life of their Church. For generations they and their forefathers have experienced the life and verified the Creed. And the Creed is the general experience of the Church, the ascertained will of the people, the Statute-book. It is curious that Church laymen are sometimes impatient of the Creeds. For laymen are the rank and file of the Church, and in the long run it is the rank and file who make the Creeds. A few clergymen, of course without intending it, obtain immense lay-popularity by sincerely regretting the "*damnosa hereditas* of Hellenic metaphysics," and by reiterated teaching that Christianity is not a scheme of dogma but a temper of mind and a way of life. But most of the clergy know better. Most of us know that Creeds preserve the Faith. They make the way practicable and the temper attainable.

Historically it is, of course, a truism that Creeds have preserved the Faith. They are defensive in their origin, and they have guarded the Faith against "impoverishments" which would have destroyed its worth. But does this mean that the Creed is our only line of defence? We begin with it,

but do we answer all suggestions of modification or revised interpretation with—

"Is it so nominated in the bond?"

When the lay-advocate, posing as an expert, seeks to relax the stiffness of the obligation and enters the classic plea for mercy, are we contented with the heartless reply—

"I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond"?

The laity will perceive that I am making them a present of a most valuable retort. But, alas! the retort cannot be used. The premiss is not admitted. We are not Shylocks.

What are we, then? The question cannot be dismissed with a mere literary allusion. It will take some time to answer.

Perhaps the most common of all the charges brought against us is that of arguing in a circle. Dr. Sanday, in the Preface to the third edition of his Lectures on *Inspiration*, refers to "the accusation so often brought against Christian thinkers of arguing in a circle, first resting the Church on the Bible and then the Bible on the Church." Dr. Sanday is speaking of the Bible, which is the particular subject of his book. But in general a more telling way of putting the accusation (and of this I do make a present, not indeed to the laity, but to my opponents) would be to say that we first rest everything on the Church and the Church on nothing at all.[1] If it is quite certain that we begin with the

[1] I have occasionally detected in those who argue symptoms of not understanding what a vicious circle is. It may be

Creed of the Church, how far are we confined to it?

Here is my definition of orthodoxy. "Orthodoxy is the earnest desire of a communicant to believe as faithfully and to understand as clearly as he can what the Church of his Baptism, being a part of the Catholic Church, and holding in her hand, and constantly appealing to, the Bible, teaches as true."

This chapter and the next are an examination of this definition. Let me take the points in order.

"*It is a desire to believe.*"—We clergy are not doubtful about ourselves. We are quite sure that no one ought to teach in the name of the Church who is intellectually compelled to deny any article of the Creed. But laymen are private individuals. They are expected but not absolutely required to join in the recitation of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds where they occur in the service of the Church, but it is not to be expected that they (or anybody else) will have an equal grip on all the articles of those Creeds. They are entitled to suspend their judgment on any point by which they are perplexed, but they ought to expect that the Church will prove

illustrated by the following story. Two well-dressed men called upon a rich and charitable merchant at his city office. One led the way in, smiling, "Ah, how do you do, Mr. Cheeryble? I have called to ask you to be kind enough to give a small donation to the funds of the United Metropolitan Improved Hot Muffin and Crumpet Bakers' Benevolent Association. May I introduce my friend, Jones?" Mr. Cheeryble, with a puzzled air, "But excuse me, I don't think I have the pleasure of——" "Oh, don't you? Jones, will you introduce me?"

to be right in the end. They ought to hope that they will see their error very soon. Meantime they have the orthodox temper if they are trying to believe their own religion. In this, as in so many cases, the direction and elevation of their aim is the important thing. All the recent teaching about evolution has called attention to the study of development. We are all aware, nowadays, that acorns and civilizations and boys and even men can only be adequately judged in the light of their possibilities. Now, orthodoxy is a spiritual thing, and therefore it is more concerned with purpose than with performance. This is, in fact, what S. Paul meant by his, "No one can say that Jesus is Lord, save in the Holy Ghost."

Orthodoxy says, "Lord, I believe. Help Thou mine unbelief." Do not be afraid of calling faith a gift. It is. When it is (truly) said that you do not create your faith for yourself, but it is given to you, of course one very obvious question is raised at once. Any one can ask, and most people do ask, why some have more faith than others. I am afraid the question is impossible to answer, but then so are many other questions. Why are some cleverer or healthier or more beautiful than others? Use what faith you have and pray for more. For faith, like eloquence in the famous bit of Tacitean untranslateability, *urendo clarescit*. "It brightens as it burns." "Let us maintain before we have proved," said Newman in Tract 85. "This seeming paradox is the secret of happiness." Huxley denounced such "championship of a

foregone conclusion" as simply immoral. But if you turn to the essay in which Huxley's great contemporary and colleague pleaded for the Use of the Imagination in Science, you will be reminded how Newton proceeded by a leap of the imagination "from a falling apple to a falling moon." If you recall "the action of Columbus in discovering America" or indeed the action of any one who ever did anything at all, your faith in experimentalism will be deepened. This leap of the imagination is a prejudice, at first provisional, but afterwards to be illustrated and as far as may be verified. *Hypotheses non fingo* is right enough, but it means additional hypotheses—

"Cycle in epicycle, orb in orb."

You cannot approach God with an open mind any more than you can treat your mother as if she were some other lady. Because faith is not purely intellectual, the condition of being able to believe is wanting to believe. And, as a Christian, and therefore spiritually humble, you will of course be prepared to admit that wanting to believe is about as far as you have gone.

At the same time Christianity is an historical religion. It takes, and has always taken, its stand on testimony. No measure of inner certainty can atone for the complete lack of testimony, though no amount of testimony can also supply the faculty of appreciating it. And testimony must be subject to criticism. The more the better. Now, the vital question of to-day is—have we here a deadlock? Does it

mean that there is an irreducible minimum of necessary *credenda*, which "are to be believed with divine faith, and if need be in the teeth of criticism?" I think the existence of an irreducible minimum is roughly true. Considered as a definition of the Apostles' Creed it is not very sympathetic, and I shall hope to show that the issue is not quite so simple as it seems, but I do think that the Creed contains the fundamental things of Christianity, which have been selected (I use for the moment purely human terms) by the instinct of the Church.

The Modernist movement, which is hated by some and is dismissed by others very much as a very different movement was dismissed by the talkers of the *New Republic*,[1] is nevertheless a very brave and

[1] "Ah," exclaimed Mr. Stockton,—his voice was melancholy as well,—"the whole teachings of that school have always seemed to me nothing more than a few fragments of science imperfectly understood, obscured by a few fragments of Christianity imperfectly remembered."

"You forget," said Leslie, "that Dr. Jenkinson's Christianity is really a new firm trading under an old name, and trying to purchase the good-will of the former establishment."

Lady Ambrose was very indignant at him for so flippant a speech as this—she felt sure it was flippant, though she did not quite understand its meaning—but once again Mr. Herbert's grave accents arrested her.

"It is simply," he was saying to Mrs. Sinclair, evidently alluding to the same subject, "it is simply our modern atheism trying to hide its own nakedness, for the benefit of the more prudish part of the public, in the cast grave-clothes of a Christ, who, whether he be risen or not, is very certainly, as the angel said, not here."

"All discussion of such matters seems to me but a diseased activity," says Mr. Rose, raising languidly a white deprecating hand.

Christian attempt to find a way out of an apparent *impasse*. The confusion and want of system which still dogs the footsteps of Modernists is due to the youth of the movement. They are struggling with new and great ideas. The extreme contrast made by some between the Christ of Faith and Christ of Fact is repudiated by Father Tyrrell, who suggests a *via media*. His argument is as follows. He points out that the dramatic reading of history in such a play as Henry VIII. must be roughly true. In the same way the dogmatic reading of history must be roughly true to the scientific reading. There is, however, besides the fact-judgment, another, which may be called the ought-judgment, a quite real and useful thing. This, second, *à priori* judgment is a thing which can be perfectly exercised by God alone. For us it is necessarily fallible through incomplete sympathy on the part of its exercisers with the Divine mind. The tendency to be fallible is seen to great advantage and comparatively unfettered in hagiography. But in the case of the Christian Creed errors are avoided and corrected by the collectiveness (and greater sense of responsibility) of the judging mind ; and, morever, to a believer in the moral government

Mr. Storks, too, though for different reasons, was apparently of the same opinion.

"In his main points," he said, with a severe dogmatism that seemed designed to end all further controversy, "and putting aside his quasi-religious manner of expressing it—which considering his position may be pardoned—I conceive Dr. Jenkinson to have been entirely right. Hitherto Lady Ambrose's views had been wavering to and fro, in a sad uncertainty. But now her mind at once cleared. Her worst suspicions of the doctor were confirmed by this fatal commendation."

W. H. Mallock, *The New Republic*, Book ii., chap. ii.

of the world, the dogmatic reading of history is more valuable than the dramatic reading even of the greatest dramatist. The historical matter of a play dealing with King Henry VIII. has merely to be recognizable. (He must have six wives or thereabouts, say, not more than seven or less than five.) But the actual career of the king did not necessarily tend to artistic truth or moral interests. The religious man, however, believes, and rightly believes, that "events are shaped ultimately in the interests of morality and religion." Hence the dogmatic reading of history has a value of its own, though it needs correction and assistance at every point from historical criticism.[1]

From this Father Tyrrell appears first of all to deduce that a partial infidelity to facts may not be without a certain justification. I venture to draw a different conclusion. Practically it comes to this. I do my utmost to consider critical questions as critical questions, but at the risk of incurring the charge of obscurantism I refuse at present to admit the possibility of things like the Virgin-Birth and the Resurrection being disproved. In my position as a Churchman, with my own experience and the tradition of the Church behind me, and incidentally with my appreciation quickened by the fact of priesthood, I cannot believe that God would have allowed His people to be mistaken on these points. If I ever were so convinced, I should not be able to

[1] The argument on pp. 162–164 is based, with a few comments, on the essay entitled "Prophetic History," in that admirable but perplexing book, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*.

go on as I am. I should have to begin again from the beginning. That is to say, I should have not only to deny a great deal of my spiritual experience, but also to forego the chief intellectual advantage of being a Churchman.

As a matter of fact this does appear to be the final conclusion of Father Tyrrell. "Belief (on the part of the Church) in herself as an historical religion implies her assurance that there are parts of her traditional history against which criticism will, as a fact, never prevail." With the chivalrous sympathy of wide interests and many-sided genius, as a Christian who practised his religion as long and as fully as he was allowed by his superiors to do so, he sums up as follows. "There have been and there may yet be many capitulations to criticism on the part of theology; and yet the theologian will be justified in holding to the substantial fact-truth of the 'prophetic' reading of history. Between such beliefs as that in the existence and crucifixion of Christ on the one hand, and that in His session at the Father's right hand on the other, there are some whose exact degree of fact-truth may be matter of long and bitter dispute; but we can rest assured that their religious truth is proof against all assaults, and that they are organically one with a creed whose incorporated reading of history is substantially true to the facts of time as well as to eternal realities."

All this will seem to rigid lay-logicians to open the door to superstition. It not only seems to, but it does. Church-superstition is the threshold of the House of Faith.

CHAPTER X

FAITH AND SUPERSTITION

But I have not yet finished my definition of orthodoxy. It is a desire to believe "faithfully." The allusion is, of course, to the *fideliter* of the *Quicunque vult*. "Furthermore, it is also necessary to everlasting salvation that he should also believe *fideliter* the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ." The English "rightly" is often thought to mean "correctly," and this obscures the moral connotation of the word. There is a kind of belief which is purely intellectual. It is satisfactory so far as it goes, but not wholly satisfying. It is like knowing the time. Its barrenness is exposed in the Epistle of S. James. Real faith is not believing facts, but belief in a still living person. It is urged by Dr. Illingworth that moral affinity is a condition of intimacy with a person, and it is even more true that a potential moral affinity is a condition of beginning to believe in Christ. However, this requires explanation.

I quoted before S. Paul's "No man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Ghost." If S. Paul had been a modern, and had not happened to be addressing Christians, he might have said that faith was a spiritual thing, but even this would not be very clear to others than the faithful. I suggest,

therefore, that we go back to the passage in S. Mark (vi. 5) where the evangelist records that "He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands on a few sick folk and healed them, and He marvelled at their unbelief." It was not that there were not plenty in that place who needed help, or plenty who cried out for help, but there was something missing in their character, the lack of which prevented them from being helpable. At the present time we can all find many round us, or, perhaps, more profitably, one within, for whom at first we wonder that Christ does not do more. But the wonder presently merges into a conviction (and, as I say, a self-conviction is the most godly, righteous, and sober form of this) that there is something missing in the character. What is that something? With one voice the non-Christians among the working-classes return the modest but inconsistent, and, happily, quite untruthful answer that it is goodness. But it is not goodness. Of all heresies the worst is to say that you must be good before you can be helped by the Friend of publicans and sinners. Then there is another answer. Those stalwart Christians here and there, who suffer from what I can only call a kind of spiritual Erastianism, would say that it is strength. But it is not strength. Moral strength is a virtue, but, thank God, it is not a preliminary condition to being a Christian. No, it is neither goodness nor strength, but only a kind of Christ-capacity.

The presence of this capacity might be compared (and I dare say it has often been compared) to a taste

for music or a sense of humour or liking to go to the theatre, all of which things are quite certainly related to Christianity. Its absence might be compared to shyness, or the negative side of Puritanism, or the handicap of being an only child, or of not having any mother. Now all these things do certainly make it much more difficult to be a Christian. But the fatal flaw in the comparison would be that many people are really compelled to go through life with one or more of these disqualifications. And some of them are Christians. Here and there you may actually find a shy, lonely, Puritan orphan, who honestly hates music, and has never seen either a drama or a joke, and is, nevertheless, a glorious Christian. Most of us cannot pretend to have had to contend with all these obstacles; some of us have faced none of them; but it is certain that there are Christians who confront them all. The reason why Christianity cannot be adequately compared to a taste for music is because Christianity is Christianity, and not Gnosticism. There is no doubt that Gnosticism must have been great fun for the committee, just as the Trojan war was great fun for the well-armed and divinely-protected leaders on both sides. But our Lord was one of the first to observe on the surface of the globe a hitherto almost unsuspected feature, the presence of humanity. And His gospel is, thank God, not reserved for the gentle reader or the gentle writer of books like this; His gospel is also, perhaps chiefly, for the ungentle millions. Not that He ever gave, or His Church has ever echoed, a promise that everybody in the world will some day be converted.

Nobody knows. The only thing we know is that we have to "commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Now when S. Paul (2 Cor. iv. 2) said that, he meant not that every individual conscience in the world would eventually respond, but that there was and could be no kind of human conscience that was inherently inaccessible. There is to-day an admirable (and, by the way, rather Puritan) movement called the Student Christian Movement, of which the motto is, "The Evangelization of the world in this generation." Not the conversion, you perceive. The leaders of the movement know quite well that that is not their business. But the presentation of my gospel by me to every one within my reach in such a way that the responsibility of rejection, if there is rejection, shall rest on them, and not on me. *Liberavi animam meam.*

In every kind of human conscience, then, Christ-capacity exists. In some it is unsuspected, in some it has been atrophied, in some it never emerges on this side of the grave, and in some it has temporarily fallen below the proper level. I will add that for this last case, which is extremely common, provision is made with extraordinary skill by the Catholic Church, and especially by the Roman part of it. The Catholic maxim that mechanical religion is not altogether barren, that superstition is not altogether a thing to be discouraged, that idolatry is better than nothing, is profoundly true.[1]

Where this capacity is living and fruitful, it may

[1] See on this point the most interesting "Reflections on Catholicism" in *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, pp. 31, 32.

perhaps be analyzed into two component parts. It is first of all a conviction of the necessity of adherence. This is a response of the conscience. It is then a self-contribution to the Person and to the Cause. This is an effort of the will. I remember being in the belfry of the cathedral at Erfurt one Saturday evening. A great bell had been rung up by ringers from below, and a man stood in the top of the belfry, and as the bell came back each time to poise he pushed with his foot a projecting piece of the wooden framework in which the bell was rooted and achieved for it a moment's balance. Then he stepped back and aside, while the bell came swinging down through the space in which he had been standing. It is a little parable. Invisible strength elsewhere had done the work; it was the bell itself which produced the voice which rang through the whole city. His only contributions were courage and agility. He applied the last culminating straw of weight just where he could use it to the best advantage. Well, the bell is the Gospel. Christ has rung it up. The man's lofty position is his Christian status. His courage and agility are such gifts as he possesses. His kick is prayer or charity or any other Christian act.

We hear sometimes of love at first sight. I suppose it is an exceptional, but perfectly genuine thing. But, anyhow, in human affection, at whatever speed it grows, there must be a moment when acquaintance, friendship, sympathy, respect or what not passes into love. So, in the case of faith in Christ, there must be a beginning to the conviction

that Jesus is the sweetest, strongest, most lovely and most wonderful Being in the world, and that beginning is a gift. You may well thank God for it, for it is the gift of God the Holy Ghost. "What is the work of God the Holy Ghost?" said a catechist to children once. "He makes you want to be good." Yes, and even more than that; not only was He there first, but He will be there to-morrow and "all the days." The Spirit generates not only the beginning of the Christward life, but the atmosphere in which it subsequently and continuously thrives.

That is what I think is meant by moral affinity being a condition of intimacy with a person. Faith is character, but at the same time it is a gift. This perhaps explains why, with the exception of the clearly exceptional cases of S. Paul and S. James, the appearances of the risen Christ were given to believers only. The Jews sought after a sign, some special overwhelming sign which would over-ride denial and compel assent. The Greeks sought after wisdom; they required of their Creator an intellectual treat. As a matter of fact, the mystery which S. Paul offered to the Jews was one which would have been a reward and an encouragement to faith. The paradox he suggested to the Greeks was one about which they and all humanity could profitably go on thinking till the crack of doom. But mystery and paradox are not things that you create: you invent, or come upon them.

Faith has been compared to all sorts of things. Here are a few of them. Wings, climbing mountains, riding on a horse's back. You will notice that all

these are instances of motion. None of them leave you standing on the ground where you began. They pick you up and carry you somewhere else. Of course, faith must be self-conscious to begin with. It must have a point of departure. Before you can lose yourself you must have a self to lose.

> "He seeks at least
> Upon the last and sharpest height,
> Before the spirits fade away,
> Some landing-place to clasp and say,
> 'Farewell! we lose ourselves in light.'"

And Christian faith is too practical ever to cease altogether to be self-conscious. The Creed begins with "I believe." But its self-consciousness is more and more flooded with God-consciousness. In one of the greatest hymns of Christian worship we are made to say "we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee," and then, when we can think of nothing more to say, when the end of consciously offered worship has been reached, we get back to God and say, "we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory." The truth is, while a man remains, as so many Englishmen remain, in a self-centred state, while he is still as it were selecting a suitable and satisfactory God in whom to believe, he cannot even begin.

Every one knows the saying about Mohammed and the mountain. There is, as far as I know, no particular reason to believe that the prophet himself invented it, but it certainly breathes the spirit of his theology. It has the masculine fatalism and the masculine trick of accommodation

to hard facts which mark his strong and popular creed. But Christianity reverses it. You have not to plough your weary way to the mountain. It comes to you. Like the enviable possessor of the "motor-bath" as advertised by E. V. L. and C. L. G., "you open the door and it rushes in." You have not to go anywhere, in the first place. You have simply to come to. And you find yourself sitting on the mountain. It has been there all the time. Then you have to be so amazed at the splendour of the mountain that you forget to be either complacent about the comfort of your seat or anxious about its security. You must be neither nervous nor sentimental, only faithful. And that is what really carries you away.

There is a verse in the New Testament, "He that will save his life shall lose it. He that will lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it"; which has been acclaimed by anti-theological interpreters as a precious fragment of morality, the real "secret of Jesus." But truly it is theology of the profoundest (and most moral) sort, the most precious of all dogmas. The whole of the Athanasian Creed is a popular and practical comment on its deep theology. For the Athanasian Creed says "the Catholic Faith is this, *that we worship* one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity." The theory of worship demands an object. You must lose yourself. Precisely. "For His sake and the Gospel's." And presently (for we are not mere dreamers) you find yourself again in Him. But the finding means re-finding, or, better

still, being found. "I worship" is an unfinished sentence. The verb is transitive, you cannot simply be a worshipper. There is the inevitable question "Whom." And if God be the end, it is not less true to say that He is the beginning. "Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith." "God begins." Faith is the answer to a call, and the call is first (the order is logical, but not always chronological) the call of Christ, and then that of His Church. And surely the trembling response to an unmerited call is from both the divine and human points of view more interesting than a realized ambition.

But does not all this belong merely to faith in Christ? Does it belong to orthodoxy? Yes, it does; for you cannot approach Christian doctrine in a mathematical spirit. To do so is applying the wrong sense. It is like trying to hear a picture or to see a song. There is, I know, a trick of modern art-criticism, which consists of using all the terms of music about painting, and all the terms of painting about music. You learn to speak of a fugue of colour, or a pink sonata. It is all very refreshing, and to some, I dare say, very enlightening. But religion cannot be approached along any one of the merely human lines. You can indeed book through to the White City, and the official hands you a combined rail- and entrance-ticket. But the approach to the City of God is not so simple. It is partly along the line of a mere faithfulness to reason: but the actual entrance-ticket is another story. It is not actually a story. It is not untrue. It is not unreasonable. But it is a mystery of which

your reason cannot grasp the whole. It is as if the Proprietor of the City had somehow found it possible to announce an endless succession of free days for an unlimited number of recommended children. The recommendation is limited solely by man's power to receive, not by God's power to give. There is an expression, "the sanctified intelligence," which, I am afraid, hardly explains itself to those who have never heard of it; but, as a matter of fact, that is what is wanted. Let me try to put it in this way. I said just now that faith has been compared to various things that carry you away. As one of these it has naturally been compared to wine. Sometimes in mockery. Sometimes in chill, rationalistic explanation. Sometimes, as in an earlier chapter of this book, in simple piety. But it is better not to compare it to the wine which, after all, has been bought by you or somebody, and can now be enjoyed with a strict sense of property. It is better to compare it to the air of heaven. The wine-drinker sits in his chair under a miserable, atheistic ceiling, and drinks as much as his purse has provided or his standard or reputation will allow. But the traveller flings himself down upon the cliff and suffers the free gift of God to flood his lungs. The orthodox man is a man on a walking tour. He chose that route on purpose. He has good lungs and a capacity for enjoyment. He has read his R. L. Stevenson. And the free air of heaven does the rest. He unites himself, by the help of a sanctified intelligence, with the gift of God and the experience of the Church.

"*It is the desire of a communicant.*"

I attempt elsewhere to consider the importance and meaning of the Sacrament. Here let me only say that the clause is vital. Without it my definition would be quite misleading. Even as it is, I am afraid that it may be possible from some points of view to pick a hole in the definition's logic. But not from my point of view. Because I take leave to assume that the eighteenth-century Test Act has been repealed for ever. The fact of a person being a communicant implies a belief that the thing is true, even though the communicant cannot for the moment believe it himself. In a deeply interesting study of the late Bishop Wilkinson,[1] Canon Scott Holland said that at times when physical weariness was great and the lamp of faith (for him) was low, he was accustomed to throw himself upon the Sacraments and let them sustain him. I say "for him" because he lived always at an exalted level. In the worst five minutes of his life he probably had more faith than most of us at our best. However, it will serve as a partial illustration. But the kind of thing I really have in mind is the pathetic semi-genuflection of a French agnostic in Notre Dame, or the attendance of the President of the Republic at the First Communion of his son.[2] The agnostic, stern, high-minded, honourable man, misses, of course, the glad exuberance which is born of faith, but he may well be not far from the Kingdom.

[1] *Commonwealth*, January, 1908.

[2] This was not, if my memory serves me, finally found possible in the case to which I refer. But it was much hoped for, and, it may be, only reluctantly withheld.

And the agnostic who knows that in time of storm and stress of all means of grace Communion is the last and not the first to be foregone, the devout agnostic, is "a sad, good Christian after all."

"Gray Mother of a reckless brood,
Dividing the eternal food
Of human need,
Fret not thyself that eager youth,
Tip-toe to reach to-morrow's truth,
Have not thy creed.

"There are, in ways of thought divine,
Who shiver on the parting line
Of old and new,
Whose faith lies bleeding, all but slain,
Yet faintly lifts the larger strain,
'Let God be true.'

"Mother, be not less brave than these;
Renounce, with them, the coward ease
Of fat content.
All groping hands, all hearts that love,
All the lame steps of feet that move,
God will prevent.

"Learn but to trample all thy pride
And Christ's red crown of thorns abide
With humble head,
Then proudly gird thyself to bend,
And minister, as God shall send,
Thy Living Bread.

"So thou art brave to suffer scorn,
So thou art strong to stand forlorn
Of all but grace,
So shall He let thee heal their loss,
And lead them, children of the Cross,
To see His face."

When I express my opinion,[1] which I know is not shared by all my brethren, that an agnostic who desires Communion should not *ceteris paribus* be repelled from it, this is the kind of agnostic that I mean.

"*And understand as clearly as he can.*"

Belief comes first, and understanding second. *Credo ut intelligam.* Remember the first rule of charity. Believe for a moment that the tramp is not a tramp. See him with the eye of faith either wood-chopping at the Labour Home, or inhabiting the lodge at the park gates. (The dream of faith will vary according to your own means and power of helping.) Not only give him but help him on with the white robe of justification, "the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," and take the chance that he will go straight out and pawn it. Do what God does to babies every day. Get a sponsor or two together and baptize him there and then, and hang the risk. The Pauline doctrine of God's "forensic" justification of sinners seems at first sight to contain an unworthy element. It appears to have its beginning in a fiction, to consist of pretending that the man is not a sinner. But this is

[1] Perhaps I may add, to guard my meaning and to conciliate those whose views are more rigid, that I should regard such a thing as a temporary expedient, to tide over a difficult time. I need not say that the duties of repentance, restitution, and amendment stand as clear for the agnostic as for anybody else, and the Book of Common Prayer is quite definite about Confirmation. There is an interesting letter about agnostic Communion in the Life of J. H. Shorthouse, and it is well known that Matthew Arnold was a frequent communicant at Cobham Church.

not really so. Even if the sentence were a verdict of "Not Guilty" it might be that such a verdict would instantly begin to be true. And, as a matter of fact, the verdict of God is "Not Guilty." It is only "The death sentence is commuted." And, in technical language, the moment the verdict of justification has been pronounced, the merciful process of sanctification sets in.

The Christian Creed as proposed for your acceptance is not so obviously repulsive and difficult to justify as the ordinary prisoner is to a judge, or as the ordinary soul must be to God, but the process of acceptance is much the same. I have admitted already that faith is a leap of the imagination, which is afterwards justified by experience and illustrated by reason. The gift of faith is a post-dated cheque. Yield yourself to the unseen. Pray. Worship the unknown, or still comparatively unknown God. And see what happens. They said unto Him, "Master, where dwellest thou?" He saith unto them, "Come and see." You remember perhaps a great horror which darkness held to your childish mind. The paralyzing fear, Miss Matty's fear, on getting into bed, that ghostly hands would reach out of the nether darkness and catch you by your last foot. There is an obvious remedy for this fear, but Miss Matty was often restrained by motives of delicacy from adopting it. But faith is more than delicacy, and must be exercised at the cost of delicacy. And the fear which faith has does not paralyze. It lifts. It quickens. It inspires. It raises you to a higher power of self. It makes you what you are meant

to be. It conforms you to the pattern which was shown to your guardian angel in the mount. It is "holy fear." You thrill and quiver at the touch of

"hands
That reach through darkness, moulding men."

"He shall give His angels charge over thee; to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee in their hands: that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt go upon the lion and the adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet." "The Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the Everlasting Arms."

It is only when resting on the peace of God which passeth understanding that you can begin to understand. After all, what is the natural order in everything? You learn first of all on authority, and later you gradually come to understand. Of course, non-Christians declare passionately that it is not right to give children this initial prejudice, to teach them in defenceless childhood what they will have to unlearn by slow and painful degrees in after-life. And that is where we frankly and absolutely join issue. The whole idea of the Church, of Infant Baptism, of denominational education, nay, the whole idea of the Christian family, is built upon the fairness of giving children a Christian education. We do not believe in calling them into father's study one fine morning when they have reached the age of twenty-one, setting before them all the religions of the world and asking them to choose. There is, of course, no question that you

can begin to be a Christian at any age, but those of us who have had a goodly heritage rejoice that we "did not so learn Christ."

"*The Church of his Baptism.*"

I tried in previous chapters to explain the nature of the Church. But even in this connection one very difficult question is bound to arise. Who are the members of the Church? In this country, at any rate, "the Church" for most people means the Church of England, whether they approve of it or not. The population is confronted by the Church of England. It exists, and to a certain extent it touches their lives. Young Viscount Bridge knows that he cannot motor through S. Paul's. "John Smith of Camberwell" recognizes, and Mrs. Smith recognizes even more acutely, that the visiting lady may call at any moment. What I myself believe is this. The Church consists of all baptized persons, but of these some only "can make good their claim to possess (the) gift in all its fulness."[1] The theological and practical agreement and support which is to be welcomed from members of Nonconformist bodies is the agreement and support of friends and cousins rather than actual brothers.

Leaving aside, then, that difficult and dangerous question, in this connection the important point is that "God begins." God was there first. I never can help thinking that the life of Samuel is the illustration of the order in which things are meant to happen. As the infant Samuel was dedicated by his devoted mother and (probably) reluctant father,

[1] Bishop of Oxford, *Roman Catholic Claims*, chap. ii.

so you were dedicated in your infancy by your mother, with possibly no more than acquiescence on the part of your other parent, to God in Baptism. You grew up a Christian child. You were surrounded by people who had some sort of vision of God, and their lives embodied some sort of attempt to respond to it. They were all saints in the New Testament sense. The best of them (if the lot fell to you in a good ground) were also saints in the modern sense. They might have been described as lamps which God had lighted. What could they do but go on burning? "The Lord God hath spoken: who can but prophesy?" For a while you live on this second-hand conviction, the beliefs and saintship of others. But it dawns upon you presently that you too have been drawn in a real sense into the movement. You go to school, and if it is the right kind of school, the teacher points a stimulating finger at you [1] and says, "Child, you have been baptized." "*Rex sapiens*," said the Stoics. "The wise man is a king," or, in other words, which are simpler because less ambiguous, and better because less Satanic, "laboriously acquired wisdom stifles in its weary possessor the rich, human ambition to become a king." But the baptized baby is a king's son. There are legends of monarchs going mad and dressing up in rags like beggars. A Christian may forget his royal inheritance. But mere sanity, the normal and almost universal condition of not being mad, reminds him that he is royal. His pride of birth is Baptism,

[1] At the best schools of all they dig you in the ribs with it.

and his orthodoxy *Noblesse oblige*. He knows that the Catholic Faith, so long as it remains merely the Catholic Faith, does him not one single scrap of good, but as soon as he is able and in whatsoever degree he is able to make it his and live upon it, it begins for him to have a value. He unites himself with the faith of millions who recite or have in life recited the creed of their common Baptism. That is the normal order of events. At the period of conversion, when the soul is ripe to be confirmed, the individual should normally awake to find himself already a member, already turned in the right direction and halfway up the hill.

Finally, the Church of his Baptism "*holds in her hand the Bible.*" The only point that needs any discussion here is the relation between the Church and the Bible. Those who have most to say about the Church are often thought to be balancing themselves precariously on a slippery slope which leads to Rome. And it is quite true that it is possible so to state the theory of development as to obscure any abruptness in the transition from Primitive to Popish.[1] But it must be remembered that survival of the fittest does not necessarily mean survival of the best. Only of the fittest to survive, of that which has corresponded most perfectly to its environment. In fact, the line of least resistance is commonly not the best. One excellent reason for not becoming a Roman Catholic is the Bible. This reason, in

[1] Bishop of Oxford, *Tests of Theological and Ecclesiastical Development*, p. 7.

proper hands, is not mechanical, because the complete test of the development of doctrine is the Bible, as elucidated by the practice of antiquity. The easiest way to illustrate the working of the familiar maxim, "The Church to teach, the Bible to prove," is this. The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament to be continued. The feet-washing is only a metaphor of service. How do we know that? It is the teaching of the Church.

There is in a once-famous book, *The Eclipse of Faith*, a fascinating essay called "The Blank Bible." It seems that the writer had a dream that all existing copies of the Bible and all Biblical quotations and allusions in other books suddenly became blank paper. The chaos that ensued is ingeniously pictured. Theology was confounded. Literature was ruined. There is a cynical estimate of the effect of prejudice on memory. The essay is a clever and not unprofitable conceit. But among other things it is an unconscious warning against putting all your eggs into one basket. If the Church were to disappear, we should have lost the bird that lays the eggs. If God the Holy Ghost were to cease His perpetual work of grace, we should never be able to refill the basket. And, worst of all, we should not want to.

CHAPTER XI

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

In what is called the Roman controversy one very common (and very satisfactory) argument for not becoming a Roman Catholic is the Bible. But the opposition, as so often, has over-reached itself. Sudden realization of the present plight of the Bible, mauled and mishandled by short-sighted friends and cross-eyed enemies, produces in some Christian bosoms a paroxysm of irrational anger, and a frantic wish to be numbered among the saints of some communion where the Bible is, if possible, unknown or on an index. The desired haven seems for a moment to be offered by the Church of Rome. It is only the discovery of the disappointing fact that Roman Catholics know the more important parts of the Bible as well as anybody, and the recollection of the sound principle that *abusus non tollit usum* that can reconcile you to the placid ark of the Church of England. The course of this book is an illustration of the difficulty of the position. I have tried so far against extreme provocation and with only very partial success to keep the Bible out of the discussion. Not that it contains discreditable secrets, like Bluebeard's chamber, or is irrelevant, like King Charles' head. On the contrary, it is vital to religion, and it is a glory of the Church.

But, like the introduction to Rob Roy, it is meant to be read afterwards. If it is taken either by naïveté or by malice to be the first chapter of the book, there is great danger that the book will either be misunderstood or cast aside unread.

There are, living in the world, beings erect upon two legs, and wearing all the outward semblance of a man, who say that the Bible, and the Bible only, is their religion. I have myself met persons of the highest character who not only say that but think it. But it is impossible. It cannot be. The Bible is magnificent, but it is not religion. It never said it was. Exhilarating, illuminating, inspiring, and inspired as it may be, it is not religion. Religion means God. The Church is religion, because the Church is the manifestation or (if you like) the impersonal Incarnation of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is simply the record of His manifestation in an earlier generation of the Church.

It is, beyond all question, perfectly impossible to exaggerate the importance of the place which the Bible should hold in the public service of the Church. I think it will be admitted that the Church of England does give it a conspicuous place. One of the leading objects of the Reformation was to restore the primitive regular reading of the Bible and recitation of the Psalter in church. Hooker's argument against the Puritans, who wanted more preaching, was that the Lessons were a kind of preaching. Even of the Apocrypha, when the Puritans at the Savoy Conference in 1661 objected to its use, the Bishops answered, "This comes ill from the advocates

of preaching. It is heartily to be wished that all sermons were as good as the Apocrypha." It is equally impossible to exaggerate the importance of and interest of the critical study of the Bible. An eminent lay-Professor of Divinity speaks of the composition and origin of the four Gospels as "perhaps the most important and fascinating literary problem in the world."[1] And finally, it is even more impossible to exaggerate the importance of its private devotional use. But in a book like this it is for a number of reasons most difficult to know what to say about the Bible. The Secularists have it on the brain. The faithful sometimes misunderstand it. Most people are extremely ignorant of it. Some ignore it. And to crown all, there are some Churchmen who, having reached a certain stage of development, are tempted to dismiss it.[2] But a clergyman, though difficulties come about him like bees, and keep him in on every side, will not unduly quail. The necessity of preaching constantly to "mixed congregations," and his habit of giving different advice to different people, and even to the same people, at different times (this is not Jesuitry, but

[1] F. C. Burkitt, *Two Lectures on the Gospels*, p. 39.

[2] This last feature of the situation is not so fatal as it sounds. They will grow out of it; and meantime it must be admitted that there are grounds for the dismissal. There *is* something rather sleek about a Bible-class. A Bible-circle is the easy prey of scoffing tongues. A hymn like "Stick to the Bible," lends itself to ribald comment. Churchpeople already have "the best bits of the New Testament" in the Epistles and Gospels of the year. And, above all, the books about the Bible are indubitably boring. We may rightly and thankfully dismiss most of them.

common sense) have given him a perhaps dangerous measure of adaptability. It is his Christian duty not to distress the simple-hearted. It is a desirable counsel of perfection not to weary the enlightened.

One thing must be stated at the outset. It has already been hinted, but it must be stated clearly and, if need be, repeatedly, so that its large implications may be seen. We do not employ the Bible as an authority to begin with. We do not (except in sermons, where it is legitimate, though dull) begin our sentences with "We are told." "The Bible says so," is not an argument we use to any one who does not happen to be anxious to believe whatever the Bible says. We resist all attempts to begin the discussion of Christianity with the first chapter of Genesis or Balaam's ass. We are moved to tears by the almost insupportable pathos of the fact that in Mr. Vivian's industrious but cold-hearted compilation, *The Churches and Modern Thought*, after a preliminary chapter on the gravity of the present situation, the second chapter is on miracles and the third is on the Bible. And, moreover, in this third chapter there occurs a section entitled, "We must accept the whole or reject the whole."

The problem of the Bible, much more if it be limited, as it is sometimes, to the problem of the meaning of Inspiration, was not due at that point. It was not due any more than miracles were due. But just as it is true that there is a way of approaching miracles, so to speak, from below,[1] so there is a

[1] The method is roughly this. It appears certain from casual references in S. Paul's undoubted letters that he and

way of approaching the Bible from below, which will induce not indeed a complete understanding, but a better appreciation. In indicating this non-committal approach I confine myself almost entirely to the Old Testament. It is naturally a point of honour to take the weakest part of the case. The New Testament is more obviously and more easily able to commend itself. Of course, even the New Testament was never meant to stand on its own basis. It was written by Churchmen to Churchmen about things which only Churchmen understand. But such is the miracle of the New Testament that parts of it, say the Gospel of S. Luke, can very nearly be left to speak for themselves.

Do people realize that their knowledge of the Old Testament is the main factor in their general education? What is the broad difference between an educated and an uneducated man? The broad difference is that the educated man has some notion of the flight of time. He knows roughly that a

some of his contemporaries possessed astonishing powers over the minds and through the minds over the bodies of men. It is beyond question that the conditions which produced these powers of healing produced also an influence in moral and spiritual directions of which we can gauge the value from their writings. Our appreciation of this confirms our inclination to accept the historicity of the other. Now, what was the relation of S. Paul to Christ? Entire and absolute subordination, nothingness. What, then, must have been the powers of the Master?

This argument is abridged from part of chap. ix. of *Essays and Addresses*, by J. M. Wilson. There is much that Canon Wilson's book does not say, and perhaps would not say if it were longer, but as far as it goes, it is a most powerful and persuasive fragment of apologetic.

thousand years is about ten times as much as a hundred years. Of course, scholars are conversant with the histories of Egypt and Phœnicia, and most schoolboys know something of Greece and Rome, but the only ancient civilization, the only record of the world's childhood with which a middle-aged banker is anything like familiar is that of the Old Testament. The Old Testament describes the experiments, failures, and successes of a versatile and spirited community. Their constitution solved the problem of the distinction between sacred and secular by the abolition of the secular. The State was disestablished. The solution of some of our modern problems is not therefore helped by them at present, but their history has many social and patriotic lessons for us to-day. The Hebrews were a people with a passion for righteousness, but the Old Testament is not a dictionary of that moral attribute, but only a series of illustrations (with a few casual principles thrown out here and there) of how righteousness can be achieved and missed. That the book is full of pagan survivals and features evolved out of paganism is a merit rather than a defect.

The Old Testament abounds with illuminating contrasts between different types of patriotism. There is the splendid, dare-devil spirit of Isaiah, who defied the armies of Sennacherib. "The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. I know thy abode and thy going out and thy coming in and thy rage

against me. I will put my hook in thy nose and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." Then there is the unpopular, but not less genuine patriotism of Jeremiah, who was accused of weakening the hands of the men of war, because he would not swim with the tide of a fallacious Jingoism. There is the inflexible determination of Mordecai and the resolution of Queen Esther. "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

There is the gay foolhardiness of Samson, the *pietas* of Ruth, the womanliness of Hannah, the gravity of Samuel, the dual personality of Saul, the heroism of Rizpah, the glamour of the reign of Solomon. There is the folly of Rehoboam, the statesmanship of Elisha, the cruel, fierce zeal of Jehu, there is Ezra of the single eye and simple mind, there is the ardent soul of Nehemiah, that composite prototype of Lord Halifax and Lord Willoughby de Broke, there is the shining courage of Judas Maccabæus. There is Abraham, the patron saint of Western Canada; there is Esau, the warning to healthy, graceless youth; Jacob, at once the terrible example and the ultimate hope of the defaulting clerk or the embezzling financier; there is the great labour-leader, Moses. Even if it be thought necessary to discount the terminology of the prophets and to invalidate their own impression of the source of their inspiration, it is noticeable that none of the prophets wanted to be prophets. Amos was no prophet or a prophet's son; Isaiah

felt himself to be a man of unclean lips; Jeremiah was a child who could not speak. They were not adventurers or money-makers, but men driven by a sense of duty to an uncongenial martyrdom. Even if it be admitted that the Old Testament was mainly written to illustrate the maxim "Be sure your sin will find you out," it remains remarkable that its compilers were not carried away by the beauty of Absalom, the pro-Judaism of Balaam or the spacious days of Jeroboam II. If the conscience of the Old Testament falters a little over the deceit of Jacob and the cruelty of Heber's wife, at least it does not shrink from recording the adultery of David, the misgivings of Elijah, the malingering of Jonah.

Rising a little in the scale, there is a whole group of considerations which cannot strictly be called arguments. They are testimonies of result. There is a well-known story that Frederick the Great once turned suddenly to a pastor, and said, "Tell me in two words the chief argument for Christianity." Whereat the pastor replied, "The Jews, your Majesty." It is true enough. The continued existence of this singular people, persecuted, homeless, with their obvious weaknesses and their astonishing strength and vitality, can be accounted for on one hypothesis alone. It is easy to turn the pages of the Old Testament and point to this feature which the Hebrews had in common with Moab, and that institution which they shared with all the Semitic tribes. But where are the Moabites now? What influence has Ammon had on Europe? Trace

the connection, if you can, between the Hittites and the Abolition of Slavery. Where are the gods of Hamath and of Arpad, and of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivah? Have they delivered their worshippers out of the hand of oblivion? It is simple to suggest that the Ten Commandments grew out of ceremonial, or even hygienic bye-laws, and were in the first instance not concerned with morals. But at all events the hygienic bye-laws grew into the Ten Commandments, and the Ten Commandments have, on the whole, commended themselves to the conscience of the world. It is clearly impossible without some kind of prepossession to maintain that the writers of the Bible were inspired, but it is possible to stand on the flat ground of Naturalism and point to a good many things that have been inspired by them. Almost anybody nowadays can prove that David did not write the Psalms, or that the postscript of *Super flumina* is not suited to the temper of a sentimental age, but is full justice done to the evidence of Mr. Prothero's *The Psalms in Human Life*, or to Mr. Marson's slighter but even more stimulating book, *The Psalms at work?*

Again, we are not ourselves reduced to insisting on the literary merits of the Bible. A man does not praise his wife for being cultured or knowing how to spell. It is more decent to leave that to the people who do not happen to be her husband. I remember well the fury of indignation with which I read in a modern book a few years ago a reference to "the exceedingly able writer of the Fourth Gospel." But if it be admitted (as I am sure it must be) that literary

merit is not literary alone; that consistent elevation of literary style depends, like scientific eminence, to a great extent on character, then the dignity and pathos and humour of the Bible are worth mentioning. Think of the Homeric simplicity of Genesis, the profound "Lest we forget" of the sixth or eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, the lament of David, the sarcasm of the prophets,[1] the Sophoclean irony of S. John,[2] the "Comfort ye, comfort ye" of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, the Napoleonic outlook of the first three chapters of Amos, the sombre tragedy of Hosea, the torrential eloquence of the answer that came to Job out of the whirlwind, the human weakness in Jonah which could not modify the general purpose, the Miltonic grandeur and the more than Miltonic meaning of the Apocalypse, the heart-rending pathos of "They were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, *whom they had desired*, but he delivered Jesus to their will."

Think of the Psalms alone. Who cares whether David or some other was their author? It is indeed the truth that for us the Psalter is part of the equipment of the Christian Church, consecrated for ever by the use which our Lord made of it, but think of the Psalms as Hebrew songs, and you will see that

[1] *E.g.* 1 Kings xviii. 27; Isaiah xliv. 12–18.
[2] *E.g.* ch. vii. 27, 41, 42.

the Hebrew genius is a thing to be considered. I could, of course, fill pages with quotations that are a sheer delight to ear and mind. It must be enough to remind you of the exquisite grace of poems like "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion" (126), *De profundis* (130), "Lord, I am not high-minded" (131), the end of the long Psalm (78), or the 23rd, the 34th, the 104th, the 107th and the 148th. But I cannot forbear to quote a verse here and there.

"The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved: but God hath shewed his voice, and the earth shall melt away."

"For, lo, the kings of the earth: are gathered and gone by together."

"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday: seeing that is past as a watch in the night. As soon as thou scatterest them they are even as a sleep: and fade away suddenly like the grass. In the morning it is green, and groweth up: but in the evening it is cut down, dried up and withered. For we consume away in thy displeasure: and are afraid at thy wrathful indignation. Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee: and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For when thou art angry all our days are gone: we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told."

"The Lord is king, be the people never so unpatient: he sitteth between the cherubim, be the earth never so unquiet."

"Be ye sure that the Lord, he is God: it is he

that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture."

"Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word. I am as glad of thy word: as one that findeth great spoils."

"Before I was troubled, I went wrong: but now have I kept thy word. Thou art good and gracious: O teach me thy statutes. The proud have imagined a lie against me: but I will keep thy commandments with my whole heart. Their heart is as fat as brawn: but my delight hath been in thy law. It is good for me that I have been in trouble: that I may learn thy statutes."

Where else can you find such insight into both the frailties and the potentialities of man? The Psalmist is one who faces facts, and yet says, "God shall send forth his mercy and truth: my soul is among lions. And I lie even among the children of men, that are set on fire: whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth. They have laid a net for my feet, and pressed down my soul: they have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise." He faces facts and yet he will not help to make them sad, whom the Lord hath not made sad—"Thou shalt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there is

pleasure for evermore." He is consumed with austere moral indignation, but his passion does not blind his eyes. In fact, his observation is sharpened to detect the grotesque antics of the ungodly, how they sit lurking in the thievish corners of the streets, how they turn their eyes down to the ground, and how in the evening they will return, grin like a dog and will go about the city. He is full of the doctrine of what was afterwards called grace; he knows well that the help that is done upon earth, the Lord doeth it Himself, and yet in a Psalm (18) of early date and possibly Davidic authorship, which shouts aloud of the Divine Majesty and Sovereignty of God, he agrees that man must work out his own salvation, and, alone among creatures, can damn himself. "With the holy thou shalt be holy: and with a perfect man thou shalt be perfect. With the clean thou shalt be clean, and with the froward thou shalt learn frowardness."

Quis habitabit (15) is the classic description of a gentleman, and the Psalmist is proved to be no snob by his consistent championship of the under dog.

His humour is sometimes broad and sometimes subtle. He laughs merrily when the wickedness of the oppressor falls on his own pate. He chuckles grimly over the disappearance of the flourishing green bay-tree. He is sobered by the suddenness and horror of the poetic justice which he discerns (73) on going into the sanctuary of God. He moralizes gently on the reassuring which the fickle populace will get out of it, as soon as the lesson has become quite obvious,

"And all men that see it shall say, This hath God done: for they shall perceive that it is His work,"

and his lip curls when he remembers how their fathers once turned their glory into the similitude of a calf *that eateth hay*. He is not destitute of the kindred gift of pathos. He sees the terrible irony of the fact that it is not his open enemy, who has done him this dishonour, but his companion, his guide, and his own familiar friend; and he must have smiled a philosophic smile when he put into the mouth of God the homely but very necessary advice to the children of men not to be so silly.

"Take heed, ye unwise among the people: O ye fools, when will ye understand? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? Or he that made the eye, shall he not see? Be ye not like to horse and mule which have no understanding."

The plain man is often puzzled by the vagaries of the critics. He is told that they resolve the Pentateuch into P and J and E, and in the case of the New Testament he hears rumours of Q and the "Ur-Marcus." He at once concludes that all this is much too complicated to be true. And really for plain purposes the Bible as it stands is good enough. But it gains immensely in value with critical restatement, and, as a matter of fact, for nearly all those who have taken the trouble to understand it, the case for P and J and E is much too strong to be resisted. There must be very few who have not been

struck by the two stories of Creation in Genesis, by the inconsistencies in the accounts of the beginning of the Monarchy, by the two origins of David, and by the singular fact that the elaborate ordinances of the Mosaic books were either unknown or continuously disregarded during the kingly and prophetic period. It must be a most welcome intellectual relief to such puzzled souls to hear what is repellantly but, I believe, quite justly called the Graf-Wellhausen theory, or even the slight measure of it which filters through Church of England pulpits. The historic sense is gratified to be able to believe that, although Moses was a notable pioneer, the bulk of the Mosaic rubrics were written at the time when they were wanted and not five hundred years before. The Divine Economy is justified when you can see that the prophets were mainly concerned with the men and needs of their own generation. The modern instinct, trained to look for development and gradual evolution, is more satisfied, by a theory of Progressive Revelation than by our grandfathers' fantastic expectation of finding Christian heads on Patriarchal shoulders. The contemporary criticism of the Old Testament is often wild and often wrong, but at least it has discovered the meaning of the first verse of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The New Testament is felt to be a more delicate matter. Many devoted Christians are convinced that their Christian honour is concerned to maintain its integrity. In some quarters it is considered justifiable to lighten the ship by throwing the Second

Epistle of S. Peter to the devouring waves, but with that possible exception the cargo must remain intact. On the other hand, some modern unbelievers, who would like to describe themselves as Christians, are restrained by the generous thought that it would not be fair to reconstruct too much. On all sides there is the persistent idea that criticism of the New Testament will lead to some new kind of Christianity which is contrasted with the Christianity of the Church. I admit that there have been German professors who thought that the Apostles were as German and as professorial as themselves. I admit that the intellectual fascination of Synoptic or other New Testament criticism has absorbed the attention of not a few who cannot by any stretch be called believers. I admit that those who go into criticism with the philosophic conviction that miracles do not happen are likely to come out of it with the historical conviction that they did not happen. A Unitarian is not likely to find the Fourth Gospel or the Epistle to the Hebrews very congenial,[1] and just as Luther had an imperfect appreciation of the Epistle of S. James, there are many Christians whose sympathy with Ephesians or the 5th and 9th chapters of Romans or the Pastoral Epistles is unduly limited.[2] I admit all this, and my sole point is that criticism tends to the more perfect understanding of the matter criticized. For my part I

[1] Perhaps in view of Dr. Drummond's famous book on the Fourth Gospel, and also his more recent *Johannine Thoughts*, this sentence would more gracefully have been omitted. But both allusions are based on actual experience.

[2] See *Lux Mundi*, Essay viii., p. 349 (5th ed.).

am not bound to assent to all that I can read of Dr. Hunsch or Professor Bunsch, or to the daring suggestions of Dr. Sanday's *Christologies, Ancient and Modern*, still less to every page of the *Hibbert Journal* or the *Encyclopædia Biblica;* but, in general, I find that by such attention as I can give to New Testament criticism my intellect is stimulated and not unduly strained, and, on the whole, my old faith is confirmed.

"Confirmed." Yes, that is the word. A proper use of proper criticism, if it could ever be achieved, would help the worst Christians towards understanding what the best have always known. Devout, intelligent criticism tends to produce the same result as devout, intelligent familiarity with the Blessed Sacrament or prayer. And the best people have always known it. The fine flower of Christianity is somehow independent of criticism. Criticism is an admirable fertilizer, but some soils do not need fertilizing. For instance, over at Oberammergau the people seem literally to have grown from childhood "in grace." From the Bürgermeister to the smallest child who walks on to shout "Hosanna," they can find their way to the mountain top without any of the guides. They are freeborn. They act their play, they carve their crucifixes, they eat their supper, they smoke their pipes. And you feel that somehow Anton Lang knows more about "the consciousness of Jesus" than all his compatriot professors, and young Alfred Bierling, the housefitter, is indeed "a disciple whom Jesus loves." But these are the *élite.* There are other villages in the world besides Ober-

ammergau, and there are towns. And nowadays theology does not reach the public as it did in Galilee or even Athens. True, I once saw a layman reading Tyrrell in the train. It was a lovely sight. It cheered me. I nearly cheered it. But that is only here and there, whereas the parables of the Kingdom were told to the people on the beach. When every allowance has been made for changed conditions, it remains the bitter truth that on the steps of the Meat Market (if it has steps) theological discussions "do not happen."

Some of us are therefore reduced to enlisting the aid of criticism. I said just now that we may rightly and thankfully dismiss many of the books about the Bible. This is quite true. It is unfortunately the case that good intentions often go with little minds and sometimes with bad taste. Happily, we are not obliged to go to "The Sign of the Cross" or the Palestine Exhibition. The S.P.C.K. publish many admirable volumes, but even the committee would not pretend that it is essential for every one to read them all. But it is vital to know that a Quest of the Historical Jesus is going on. It is imperative for all those who are not free-born to refrain from dissipating the great sum which would enable them to obtain this freedom on odds and ends. Every now and then a frightful tragedy is revealed. The discovery is made of what is really being read. A letter in the Press or the first day of the holidays discloses the horrid fact that the Public School Divinity lesson is devoted to the wars of Joshua. If circulations go for

anything, the working classes in their thousands must be poring over the R.P.A. reprints, and it is notorious that the governor, the good, old, solid, "sober, peaceable and truly conscientious" governor nods on Sunday evening, when it is too wet to go to church again, over some stodgy volume from the inherited library of his uncle, the clergyman. And all the time the quest of the real Jesus, the mad exhilaration of a genuine pursuit, with the near promise of success, is at their doors. The Hunt is thundering by. The hounds are hard on the scent. The members of the Hunt and a handful of enthusiastic amateurs are almost beside themselves with excitement. And meantime the squire is inspecting his valuable collection of imported tortoises, the working man is laboriously getting up the case against the rotten boroughs; the young gentlemen are shooting rabbits, or playing bumble-puppy on the lawn.

It is the English tragedy. The pursuit is just going to be rewarded. Faith is just about to be confirmed. And ninety per cent. of people have not realized that anything is up. They didn't even know there was a meet. They are satisfied with a convention instead. And their convention is the established Christ. With the traditional halo. Not altogether without meaning, but machine-made and unverified. But acquiescence, even with an honest touch of awe, is not the same as the throb and quiver of the worshipping saint,

"consum'd, yet quicken'd by the glance of God."

Nor is it the same as the confirmed conviction of those who have gone down, perhaps with dizzy head and stumbling feet, but with a brave purpose, into the abyss of criticism ; who have scorned the vain delights of a fool's paradise, and have descended with their faith in one hand and their happiness in the other into the dangerous stratum of evidential inquiry ; who have found that the same star which lightens the gay footsteps of the hillmen shines also in the sombre depths of the ravine.

CHAPTER XII

THE BURNING HEART

THE devotional reading of the Bible, or, as it is most properly called, Meditation, is a thing which is hardly without presumption to be described. If you want to know what monastic life is, you have to go to the oldest, most experienced and most spiritual monk. But I will try to indicate its nature. And I will begin with the Old Testament.

To meditate profitably on the Old Testament is a task of extreme difficulty. Only those who are stored with experience of the ways of God and man can range beyond the obvious paths. Any one can draw to himself spiritual lessons from the vision of Jacob, the chivalry of David, the paedagogic tolerance of Elisha,[1] the irresolution of Joash,[2] the call of Isaiah, the intrepidity of Daniel. Any one can stimulate his conscience by reading of the faithful dealing of Amos with the king, of Joel with the laity, of Jeremiah or Ezekiel with a worldly ministry, of Malachi with the middle classes, of Isaiah in his first chapter with the "spikes" and with "the drink-question and the land-question"[3] in

[1] 2 Kings v. 18, 19.

[2] 2 Kings xiii. 19.

[3] This is a well-known phrase from Professor G. Adam Smith's *Isaiah* in the Expositor's Bible.

his fifth. The meanest clergyman that blows can extract from the life of Abraham or the moral rottenness of Solomon thoughts that lie deep enough for a most searching sermon. The women's Guild in the poorest of poor parishes may well be counselled to avoid the unwifely mocking of Michal, Saul's daughter, and to imitate the sacrifice of a Hannah, the brave discretion of an Abigail.

But beyond such easy warnings and examples (and there are many of them) only the sure-footed should attempt to go. The giddy or inexperienced are apt to fall into the unjustifiable use of Old Testament quotations, divorced from their context, which was condemned by Maurice. His instance was the application of "Where the tree falleth, let it lie" to the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment. It is as simple (and as wicked) to wrest "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" into an argument against Papal Infallibility as it would be to make "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" an argument in favour of it. There is much to be said for the allegorical interpretation of the Song of songs, but it wants watching. "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing, go ye out from the midst of her" is not really a warning against ritualism or a defence of schism, nor is it fair to call Nadab and Abihu the first dissenters. As a matter of fact, there was a healthy smack of Nonconformity about Elijah and several of the prophets. It was said once of a Professor of Ecclesiastical History, a man greatly beloved, that for him "a saint was a saint and a heretic was a

heretic." This wholesome narrow-mindedness is admirable as a guiding principle, where there is knowledge and an enlightened conscience, but freely and ignorantly exercised on the Old Testament it may lead to a sanction of Christianly-unsanctionable things. And even apart from right and wrong, it is unprofitable without wise guidance to meditate overmuch on the pins of the tabernacle, the dimensions of Noah's ark, the plagues of Egypt or the five golden mice. The wrestling of Jacob in the interpretation of a Charles Wesley[1] is a divine parable: the sermons of a Maurice on the Prophets and Kings, of a Bishop Butler on Balaam, of a Newman, a Liddon, or a Spurgeon, are marvels of spiritual analysis. The Psalms have been treasuries of inexhaustible teaching to the Augustines, Origens, and Chrysostoms of every age. It may even be true, as some think, that more and more the chief use of the Old Testament will be seen to consist in allegorical interpretation, but it will need a good guide, or at least experience and a steady head.

But the devotional reading of the New Testament is an altogether different thing. When Arthur Stanley, as a young man, travelling with a friend in Germany, paid a call on Ewald, who was then the great German neologian, they were reassured when the old scholar held up a worn copy of Tischendorf's Greek Testament and said, "Ah, gentlemen, in this little volume is all the wisdom of the world." Such tributes might be adduced from a thousand quarters. The victories of the Bible, and especially of the

[1] In his hymn, "Come, O thou traveller unknown.'

New Testament, are nothing short of marvellous. It has triumphed over the unattractiveness of its own binding and appearance, over its severity, over the doctrine of its literal inspiration, over its banishment between closed covers to the round table of the unused parlour, it has triumphed over undenominationalism itself. It is true that I for one can never cease either to believe or to proclaim that the New Testament cannot be really understood without the Church. For while it would be unfair to say that popular undenominationalism, the cult of the open Bible, has locked the door and thrown away the key, it may with perfect truth be said of undenominationalists that they reject the official guide-book, provided by the management, and, moreover, they have left their spectacles at home. But given the fully Christian standpoint, and thank God, to a wonderful extent without it, the New Testament is a veritable garden of the soul. The wayfaring man may indeed err therein, but there are many who do not. There was a garden once from which two were driven out, and angels and a flaming sword, which turned every way, were set to keep them from coming back. There is a garden now to which there is a Door, and by that Door if any man enter in, he shall be safe, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. When a Churchman, be he never so enlightened, gives up the Bible, it is time that he made a new rule of life. We must be Bible-Christians. In scores of things we are always finding out that the Church was right and we were wrong. This is one of them. The Church has always trusted the

Bible. The Fathers were saturated with it. The wisest counsellors and the greatest preachers to-day never pretend that they have found out anything for themselves, but always unfold it from the Bible. There is an honoured living teacher to whom this splendid eulogy has been given. Men say of him that when they went to him at Oxford for counsel, they always got something out of the Gospels, with an exact bearing on their case—the fruit of his recent meditations.

After all, what are the Gospels for? They were written for two purposes. That we might read in them first the earthly life of Jesus, what He did and said and suffered and achieved, and secondly, how people who were in all respects ordinary and representative bore themselves in the various relations of amazement, envy, discipleship, and hatred to that transcendent personality.

Language, say cynical philosophers, is given to us to conceal our thoughts. The New Testament, say Christian souls, is given to reveal Jesus. And what is Jesus? "Who, then, is this," before whose uplifted finger the windy wisdom of the world is silenced and the raging seas of passion are controlled? Jesus, the Word of God and the Son of Mary, the Dayspring from on high Who was the Friend of publicans and sinners, the King of Glory Who preached the Gospel to the poor. Was ever so strange a combination of utter personal humility and boundless claims? He is poorer than the birds and foxes, and He invites mankind to be His servants. He forgives sins; He expects fishermen to

lose the tide and financiers to abandon profits in order that they may become the unpaid disciples of an obscure dreamer and a non-party revolutionary. Yet He respects the liberty of the individual as no government or constitution has ever dared to do. He is genuinely touched by the confession of S. Peter. His quiet, sole verdict on spiritual pride is to say that it has received its reward. He trusts Himself to the chivalry of men. Not merely does He disdain to pack the jury; He does not even seem to be sure that the truth ever will prevail, or that the verdict ever will be on His side. For with all His consciousness of God, with all His theoretic optimism and His daily, hourly confidence, first in Himself and then, by consequence, in the brethren whom God has given Him, for all His eager metaphors about swords and lamps and coming on the clouds of Heaven, He has the incredible fairness to remember that the Son of Man, when He cometh, may not find faith upon the earth. The hammer of Thor breaks down the carved work of sanctuaries and the machinery of civilizations, but the Only-Begotten of the Father will not crack the eggshell of a single conscience. He is not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Modern psychology ransacks two continents and all history to find varieties of human nature and human excellence, and then is amazed (or might be) to see that all experience is covered and all ideals are realized in a few short years,

"That breath'd beneath the Syrian blue."

Turn to the Gospels. Watch this strange Being,

Who passes from the Mount of the Transfiguration to a street-crowd and an epileptic boy, the confident and confidence-inspiring master of two situations a whole world apart. Listen while He composes the misgivings of respectable, middle-aged Jews by saying that He is come to fulfil their great tradition. Yet see how fearlessly He reconstructs the law. There is all the enthusiastic radicalism of youth, and yet (if I may dare to say it) there is the ripe experience and master-touch of One Who was there when Moses wrote, Who whispered in the ear of Abraham, Who was in the beginning with God. No language is too high for His high purpose; no duty too insignificant for His full consideration; no fact is small enough to be forgotten. Mountains are to be plucked up. Millstones are to be hanged round people's necks. There are to be storms and earthquakes. The sun is to be darkened; the moon will not give her light; the stars shall fall from their places and the powers of Heaven are to be shaken. Persecution is to be the common lot of His disciples; treachery and parricide the inevitable consequences of His dividing Gospel. And yet He does not mind talking about figs and thistles. He is fond of dirty little children, and He makes His Sacraments out of water and bread and wine. Measure, if it be possible, by the span of a single genius or a single generation or a single race, the stupendous contradictions which He so gently and so naturally exhibits. The Gospels describe One Who dealt calmly in beatitudes at which the world is still gasping, and yet had too much common sense to interfere with somebody else's

father's will. One Who could feed five thousand and then save up the bits. One Who outraged the proprieties of an Oriental funeral by a cynical seeming to disparage mourning, and then reminded the very parents not to forget to put some milk and bread and butter by the side of the child's bed. A Man of Feeling, Who was the foe of sentimentality: Who wept and groaned and chastened Himself with fasting; Who loved the dear, stupid twelve and the homely simplicity of week-ends at Bethany, and then trod the winepress by Himself and died alone. Who was consumed with zeal for His Father's house, and yet nipped the fatuous comment of a sentimental sermon-taster in the bud with the grim reminder, "Rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

The Gospels, then, are a picture of the life of Jesus. He is always, either visibly or by the spiritual chains of intercession and redeeming purpose, the centre of a world. The minor characters of the New Testament are described for our admonition. They are not merely like us. They are ourselves. Not only is our Lord the Catholic Man, but those who lived and talked with Him represent in the variety of their characters and needs, and in the universality of their experiences, the Catholic Church. Zacchæus is any one who is rich or humble or will take trouble in the hope of finding a religion. The Syro-Phœnician woman or the wife of Zebedee is any mother. Peter's wife's mother can be seen any Monday afternoon. She is an old woman whom the Lord has healed, and now she spends her time pottering about and going

to the Mothers' Meeting, and ministering as far as she is able. The brethren of the Lord who could not yet believe are the good agnostics. The parents of the man born blind are many a modern parent. The message which came to Pontius Pilate is "from any wife to any husband." Thousands of men have tried, like Pilate, to wash their hands. Millions have shouted, "His blood be on us and on our children," and on millions the curse has, unwillingly, come home. The Holy Week is repeated every Holy Week, and the woman of Bethany is the Church. The women who were early at the place on the first Easter Day are the women who are the backbone of the Church of England. The young man with great possessions came back again years later. His name was Francis of Assisi, and he has had many sons. Herod is the well-fed citizen who notes with satisfaction the capital advice given by John Baptist to soldiers and publicans and others. Lazarus is a silent lay-communicant. Mary is a Contemplative. Martha is a Borough Councillor. The Apostles are types of every kind. Peter is Irish, Andrew is Scotch, Matthew is Jewish, Philip is an Englishman, Simon Zelotes is American, Thomas a German, John a Celt. Nathanael is a country clergyman. All India is summed up in Nicodemus, and Simon of Cyrene is everybody in the world.

It would be easy to go through nearly all the names in the New Testament. Philemon is the faithful warden or member of the Church Council to whom the Vicar knows he can appeal at any time with the practical certainty of getting an overflowing response.

Phœbe is now, as she was then, a Deaconess. Onesimus is the young man lodger, who went out o' nights, but, thank God, was at last got hold of when they had a mission in the parish. There is a Eutychus in every congregation. He tries to keep awake, but, poor lad, he is a grocer's assistant, and the shop is open on Saturdays till twelve. Gamaliel is a cultured non-Christian who is honestly impressed by the robust work of the slum-ritualists, or the breezy, bustling methods and the crowded congregations of Mr. Watts-Ditchfield at Bethnal Green. The story of the Ethiopian eunuch may be read in the literature of Uganda or Zanzibar. Lydia builds churches and endows them. Rhoda is the G.F.S. John Mark is the curate. The Ephesian elders are a Diocesan Retreat. Hymenæus and Philetus are the New Theology. Demas was ill-prepared for Confirmation at his Public School. Demetrius, the silversmith, is the person against whom the White Lists of the Christian Social Union are directed. Diotrephes —well, we all know two or three of him. The orator, Tertullus, is constantly writing to the *Times*. Lois, Eunice, and Timothy are a permanent (and most attractive) trio. "Gaius, mine host" is the Chairman of the Church Congress Hospitality Committee. Erastus is the good banker who acts as Honorary Treasurer to innumerable societies. The attitude of Julius, the centurion, to S. Paul is the attitude of any policeman mixed up with any clergyman in any row. "I, Tertius" is the choir-secretary, who copies out the hymn-lists. "Quartus, a brother," would have been dismissed a generation ago as an unknown

and insignificant quantity; but an Archbishop has found him out and realized his possibilities. He is the Church of England Men's Society. The black cloaks of Tabitha, Tryphæna, and Tryphosa are to be seen wherever there is sickness to be tended and misery to be relieved. The broken harmony of Euodia and Syntyche is a thing that occurs in every parish. The incredulity of the chief captain at S. Paul's knowledge of Greek is exactly what was expressed in London when West End culture was taken by storm by Bishop Creighton's cleverness. And I have sometimes dared to think that Apollos is Sir Oliver Lodge.

Such are the minor characters of the New Testament. They show the results that may be expected whenever and wherever human beings are brought into touch with Jesus Christ. Quite apart from the few dozen names he mentions, S. Paul's letters enable any one to see precisely what response he anticipated and what response he obtained to his appeal. The life of ordinary Christian sinners is revealed in them. It has been lately pointed out that the real bridge over the chasm that seems to gape between the "world of Syrian peasants" who listened to the Sermon on the Mount, and the "world of Greek philosophers" who made the Nicene Creed, is to be found in the earliest stratum of the Gospels themselves. "What manner of being is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" "We may leave on one side the miracle. It is enough that something unusual had happened, something that formed a kind of

climax in the new experiences of that little band of followers—those Syrian peasants. In the moment in which the Syrian peasant puts to himself that question, we need not say the peasant in him died, but that the Christian theologian was born." [1] They certainly were not born philosophers in the beginning. They certainly did not achieve philosophy in the ordinary academic way. It is quite clear that it was thrust upon them. Something which can be variously described—an accident—the result of a chance meeting and a new environment,—or the nomination of His pre-ordained Apostles by God Incarnate, with their stammering efforts to respond, —is turning them into philosophers before your eyes. The admirable essay of Professor Baker is on the ethical significance of Christian Doctrines. My point is less profound. It is merely that every line of the New Testament other than the words of our Lord shows human nature confronted by an overwhelming personality, and the chaos, conversion, and construction which ensued. The Old Testament exhibits the life of a religious nation. The New Testament exhibits the life of the Christian Church. It was exactly the same life then as it has been ever since, except that, rightly or wrongly, the lights are not now quite so high and the shadows are not quite so dark.

It would be a fascinating task, but it would quite outrun the proper limits of this chapter, to go through all the books of the New Testament. I must

[1] J. F. Bethune-Baker in *Cambridge Theological Essays*, p. 544.

conclude with a brief appreciation and a parable. S. Paul is far and away the most interesting character in history. A shepherd of souls and an organizing genius, a man of many friends, a gentleman, warm-hearted, irritable, tender and affectionate, yet cast in heroic mould, combining to an astonishing degree humility and courage, courtesy and resolution, passion and common sense. Passages of his letters are as eloquent as anything ever written, and yet he is never trying to be eloquent. A brutal critic has suggested that Shakespeare's Plays were pot-boilers. S. Paul's Epistles are not even pot-boilers. They are his casual conversation, his remarks at meals, the house-to-house greetings of a parish priest. But open some standard commentary like Sanday and Headlam's Romans, and see their list of "detached notes." In a few cases the titles are technical and unfamiliar, but the topics are those of to-day and every day. Think of a man whose essay of a few thousand words, written in spare moments and, so to speak, in trains and waiting-rooms and omnibuses, is practically the *locus classicus* on the relation between faith and conduct, the righteousness of God, Justification, the meaning of the Old Testament, the Fall of Man, the doctrine of Mystical Union with Christ, the Renovation of Nature, Election, the Power and Rights of God as Creator, Predestination, and Free Will. A man whose ineradicable Hebraism gave him a true outlook upon life, whose Greek environment and command of the Greek language made him the creator of Christian theological terminology, whose

Roman citizenship gave him his dream of a Christian Empire. A man who could wither the Corinthians with the only weapon that ever pierces spiritual pride, and yet call them, as indeed they were, his beloved saints. A man who could write Philippians *and* Ephesians *and* Galatians *and* Philemon. A man who had resisted conviction, as we all do, for years, and then faced the humiliation of admitting that his whole previous life had been a gigantic error, who endured incalculable hardships and disappointments, and the loss of every friend and relation that he had. All this without a groan, without even a murmur. Why? Because he once saw Jesus, Whom he had persecuted, and there and then laid his whole being at His feet.

I do not want merely to tickle ears with apt appreciations. I want you to read the writings of this man, with only your Christian experience and Christian fellowship to guide you, and such introduction as may be got from any school-book. And I want to bring you back to study the artless magic of the Acts, the evangelical milk of the First Epistle of S. Peter, the thunder of the Apocalypse, the inspired croonings of the First Epistle of S. John. In a single final sentence I remind you of the neglected Epistle to the Hebrews, in which you can find on one page the plainest of plain preaching—the Village Sermons of a great divine—and on another page the Christian meaning read, as by an Apostolic Ruskin, into the symbolic pageantry of the Tabernacle and Melchisedec.

I said before that it seemed a point of honour

to begin with the Old Testament, the weakest part of the case. At any rate it is a point of Christianity to end with the Gospels. For in a sense the Law and the Prophets may be the Prologue; the Acts and the Epistles are the applause of the first-nighters; Church History is the never-ending run. But the Gospels are the actual drama.

Enlarge the sense of the word "drama." Break down the walls and multiply the audience beyond the capacity of any theatre made with hands, and you get a parable like this.

Let us suppose that the object of mankind is to behold the sun. Our home is in the plain, and the air here is thick and murky. So many factories and kitchen chimneys have been built that really it is quite difficult at times to remember that the sun is there at all. But there were once four men who independently, albeit all acting under orders, discovered four separate mountain-tracks to points from which the sun can be seen clearly. These tracks are still open, aud we often use them. There is, as a matter of fact, a Company which nominally owns them. But there is no fee. The Company likes but does not demand a recognition of its right.

The four points of view are very various, but the effect is surprisingly the same. The oldest of them all shews you the sun beating down upon a hard, straight, Roman road, where men are hurrying along. It produces an impression of strength and purpose and beneficence. There is not much time to stop and talk, but it means strongly and means well. Another, which most would think of as the

first, but it is not the oldest, gives a very charming picture of the sun lighting up the ruins of an ancient Temple, which in the dark would hardly have been noticed. Echoes of prophecy and the atmosphere of worship still cling round the walls, and when the light falls on the frescoes and chipped carvings, it is fascinating to observe their modern application. The writing on the wall is very stern: it is an ultimatum to a people who had many chances. But the sight of an empty spot, where the altar was, begets a hope that perhaps it has been set up again elsewhere. The third point shews the shining of the sun on city life, a city where men, and an unusual proportion of women, are living and loving and praying and showing mercy. There is a maiden and an angel and some shepherds and a Child sitting among doctors. There is a room filled with the sweet odour of a prostitute's repentance. There are some quite poor people, beggars, a Good Samaritan, the dead son of a widow, a swineherd, and a publican and lots of children and a highwayman and One Who said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The fourth is sublimely simple. A line of light is shining on the water. As it was in the beginning, before man was made, as it is now every day, and as it ever shall be. The Heaven is full of the glory of God, and the earth, little by little, soul by soul, shall be filled with the knowledge of His Son, as the waters cover the sea. The sun falls on the water, and here and there you can see a fisherman, fishing from a little boat. One by one the light finds them.

John whispers to Peter, "It is the Lord." In a moment Peter is on his feet, clenching his fisher's coat round him in the ecstasy of the conviction. In another moment he is in the water. How is he straitened till he can accomplish the Baptism from which he will emerge forgiven and regenerated by the Risen Lord! Then, "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" Has Simon the converted soul, without which he will never be a shepherd? "Ah, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." "Feed My lambs." Not only forgiven and regenerated, but commissioned. Commissioned to be a shepherd of the flock, to feed and tend the lambs whose sins the Lamb of God hath taken away. The forgiveness consecrates his penitence; the regeneration marks it as accepted; the commission girds him with humility. From this time he is *servus servorum Domini.*

> "Chief of Thy faithful band,
> He held himself the least,
> Though Thy dread keys were in his hand,
> O Everlasting Priest."

Such is the epilogue of the Fourth Gospel, and its burden is the burden of the Gospel itself—the tender care of the Good Shepherd for the growth of faith and character in individual souls, the Twelve, and them that should thereafter believe on Him through their word. "These signs are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in His Name."

CHAPTER XIII

GOING TO CHURCH

"To be clerically-minded is death," was the pungent, and not really profane epigram of a brilliant layman.[1] Anyone who seriously considers the life of the parson must realize that, as I said in the beginning, it is a dangerous trade. His whole prospect of personal efficiency is bound up with the task of making himself a skilled professional, with a good knowledge of his unique and complicated craft. At the same time his sole chance of being able to bring his craft to bear on the people for whose sake he exists depends on his remembering that their outlook, their advantages and disadvantages are quite different from his own. I have tried in the course of this book to indicate the difference between the sacerdotalism, which is true and good, and the clericalism, which is false and bad. Let me make one final attempt. There is a drama, very popular in South London Music Halls, called *The Fighting Parson*. It is not my purpose to criticize it, because I have never seen it. But in the picture, which prepares the public for its

[1] I do not know who is the author of this. It was repeated to me by a clergyman, but I give the laity the benefit of the doubt.

advent to the local "Grand," the hero is represented as throwing off his clerical coat, in the limelight, with the words, "There's the coat, and here's the man." This may be all right. He may be justified in parting with some of the "clothes that distinguish him from his fellow-Christians" because he is just going to fight with two or three of them. Or, it may be a symbol of his conversion from an evil clericalism. Or, it may have no meaning whatever. But it may be a sinister expression of the erroneous belief that the coat in some way prevents him from being a man. If it is this, it is a fatal error. And I am nearly sure that it is this, because the people who go to South London Music Halls almost always dislike clergymen in the abstract, and almost always like the particular clergyman whom they happen to know, on the ground that he is different from all the others. To be a complete series of brilliant exceptions to the rule is gratifying for us as individuals, but we are sad to think that the rule is still believed to hold. The truth is that, if the priest wishes to be a man, it is not necessary to leave off being a priest. Father O'Flynn claimed licence to be an Irishman too, and it is not even possible to be a man of God unless you are, to begin with, a man. As a matter of fact, it takes much more manhood to beard your rich parishioner and tell him to his face that he really ought to double his subscription to the Missionary Union than it does to play cricket. To play cricket you only want to be a boy, which is comparatively easy.

The clergyman is really very like Macbeth. His real, best self is expressed in the lines—

> "I dare do all that may become a priest,
> Who dares do more is none."

But the tragedy, where there is a tragedy, consists of this. He may take the world instead of the Church to be his conscience; he may yield to the Capuan promptings of his own soft nature; he may be deceived by the specious ingenuity of diabolical suggestion; the world, the flesh and the devil may combine to lead him on to assassinate his Master, to deny his calling, to betray his trust, to crucify his King. Ambition, a worldly, calculating wife, and favouring circumstances were the undoing of Macbeth. Personal sins, acquiescence in a worldly standard of life or a worldly estimate of clerical duty, and the machinations of devils who do not die the moment he is ordained, may be the ruin of a priest.

> "Presbyter in Christi mensa quid agis bene pensa :
> Aut tibi vita datur
> Aut mors aeterna paratur
> Dum candela luit se destruit officiando ;
> Presbyter ita ruit, si sit reus, celebrando ;
> Mors tua, mors Christi,
> Fraus mundi, gloria caeli, et dolor inferni,
> Sunt memoranda tibi."

Or this :—

> "O Sacerdos, quid es tu ?
> Non es a te, quia de nihilo :
> Non es ad te, quia mediator ad Deum :
> Non es tibi, quia sponsus Ecclesiae :
> Non est tui, quia servus omnium :
> Non es tu, quia Dei minister,
> Quid es ergo ? Nihil et omnia,
> O Sacerdos."

Or, for those who prefer plain speaking in the mother-tongue, there are grave words of warning in the Form and Manner of Ordering of priests according to the Use of the Church of England. The terms of our commission remind us that we are to set forth in word and deed "not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord," and we have to live, if need be, in the spirit of one who said "He must increase," even if it be at the cost of our strength, our reputation, our immediate success.

But there is another mind, which was not in Christ Jesus, and that is the parochial mind. And there, say our lay friends, the case is clear against the parson. Well, perhaps it is. And perhaps, also, narrowness of a certain sort is vital to efficiency. No one nowadays can take all learning for his province. It is not that Francis Bacon was the last all-round man, but that the province has become too big. Division of labour and limitation of attempt have become essential. Few nowadays are called, like Wesley, to take the world for their parish. There are men whose gifts can be best exercised if they have a roving commission to make their message heard wherever it can reach, but such men often long to get back to a Church and Parish and Altar of their own. The real work of a Parochial Mission is done before and after. The conversion of a heathen or a sinner may come only after the continual application of laborious and concentrated effort. The priest whose province is one parish is compelled for lack of time and strength to abandon many of the interests of his younger days, and if

he is wise he contrives to commit such civic work as he desires to see achieved to some of his lay friends. It is better, as a rule, for him to prepare the Borough Councillors for Confirmation than to be the Mayor himself. Concentration and a measure of limitation are conditions of spiritual usefulness. Here enters the dividing line. If he is only concerned with the numbers of his congregation, or the fortunes of his Parochial Sewing Guild: if he can never appeal with fervour of conviction for any object other than the Vicarage Fund, or the New Vestry Heating apparatus: if he knows nothing of Uganda or the Poor Law; if he has never heard of Lodge or Loisy or Labour-Exchanges or Lloyd-George: if he has no opinions about Strikes and Socialism and Shakespeare and S.P.G.: if he never prays for Thrift or Temperance or teachers, he has mistaken the meaning of the word "spiritual": he is a parochial slut.

But we have many things to save us from becoming such. Mr. Alexander Paterson in his fascinating book *Across the Bridges*, describes how in old days a boy, bound apprentice to a firm of Tea Importers, would go down to the quay and see the Oriental chests unpacked, and so learn something of the size and wonder of the world. Now all is changed. The boy stands all day with other boys in the same room at the factory and sticks labels on to pounds of tea, or makes up dummy packets of "Best 1*s.* 6*d.*" for the shelves of the small grocer. The boy of 1812 dealt with China; the boy of 1912 deals with tea, and sometimes not even that. But

the priest still deals with spiritual forces and still deals with the characters of men. It is the most hazardous, adventurous, romantic, glorious work in all the world. The layman who goes to supper at the Vicarage on Sunday night is annoyed when the old Vicar beams through his spectacles and remarks to wife or curate that he was so pleased to see Mr. Jones in church. But if the layman were in Mr. Jones' confidence, or knew the sordid tragedy, the good desires and broken resolutions, the cruel circumstances and few encouragements that make up Mr. Jones' life, he would begin to understand. The Vicar's experience and expression are alike parochial, but his outlook is upon the kingdom of God, the Universal Church of Christ, and his weapons are the weapons of the Eternal Gospel. He is bringing, in his own humble and perhaps foolish way, elemental forces to bear upon elemental needs. There is an Evening hymn which the profane call "Matins in America." It begins, "The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended." It is a favourite hymn for a parochial Evensong when the Vicar has preached "my sermon" to "my people" and the collection for Church expenses is being taken up. Yet it cannot be sung without reminding all, whose hymn-singing is not purely physical, of world-wide work. The sermon, even the sermon that pleads for the Choir-fund or prepares the way for the formation of a Parochial Guild, is not intended to be preached without an express bidding to prayer for "the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the world," and "the whole Commons

of this realm," and to the praise of God for "all the faithful which are departed out of this life."[1] And finally, the Vicar cannot give Communion to half a dozen women on a week-day morning without inviting them to pray with him for the whole state of Christ's Church, and to join with angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven in the adoration of that Universal Master by whom those few and all the whole Church obtain remission of their sins and all other benefits of His Passion.

It is considered very narrow-minded for a priest to say that his principal object is "to get people to come to church." And I entirely agree that a truer and worthier description of our aim is "to produce the Christian character." And for the clergy of many a parish in Kensington and elsewhere it is worth while to draw the distinction. In Battersea we do draw the distinction more often than most outsiders would think, but on the whole with working-class people the two aims are one. Ruskin once advised the clergy to reverse their efforts and to spend the best part of their energies in keeping the sweater and the swindler away from church. This uncompromising Puritanism is strong and refreshing, and must certainly be practised from time to time, especially among the rich. But the clergy of South London or of the average parish anywhere are not faced by the problem which Ruskin felt. In the first place, ninety-eight per

[1] The allusion is to the Bidding Prayer, which is ordered in Canon 53 of 1603 to be used by all Preachers before their Sermons.

cent. of the wicked show no desire whatever to come to church. In the second place, the two per cent. who do, find in their church-going their one link with better things. Their church is for them a school, a hospital. Of course, two per cent. is a very small proportion, which in at least one other Christian communion is far surpassed. The reason for its smallness is that, although Christianity is really a religion for the bad, it is unfortunately at present almost monopolized by the good. Magdalen does not go to church because partly she thinks that it would not help her, and partly she is afraid it might. And, sad to say, many church-goers would not like it if she did. In the third place, whereas the man in Kensington who does not go to church may be reading Browning or the Imitation, and it is even within the bounds of possibility that he may be thinking, the man in Battersea who is not in church is probably doing none of those things. It would be both absurd and wicked to say that in Battersea non-church-going is irreligion. But it is roughly true to say that in a working-class parish church-going means religion. It may mean other things less excellent as well, a tendency to become unduly respectable, an unnecessary degree of Puritanism, a more or less complete misunderstanding of the meaning of Sunday, all of which are to be deprecated, but it does mean belief in Christ and a high conception of the Christian life. If it was, ever, anywhere, a profane convention, it is not now in Battersea.

The working-man, then, believes that the

principal activity of the Christian life is to go to church. Of course, he is constantly being told that the real object is the production of the Christian character, but whether he is himself a church-goer or not, he insists on believing that the main object of the clergy is to fill their churches. Now in fundamental things the working-man is right. In all the more complicated and delicate issues of life the working-man is wrong. He is wrong in his choice of pictures, plays and sermons. He is wrong in his dislike of quiet country places. He is wrong in the education of his children. He is wrong in his estimate of the comparative merits of Beethoven and Sousa, of Shakespeare and John Bull. He is wrong in his reception of sentimentality, eloquence, and jokes. But in fundamentals he is right. He is sound on birth and babies. He is perhaps a little exaggerated and theatrical about death. But this is a pardonable vulgarity. His Christianity has grown a trifle morbid, that is all. He is perhaps insufficiently romantic about marriage, but he is sound on its necessity. And in religion he does know that Pharisaism is worthless. Thousands of working-men do not call themselves Christians, for the pathetic reason that the profession of Christianity involves a standard of life they do not propose to aim at, or think they could reach but not maintain. And as to worship, among many misunderstandings he is clear at least, on this, that religion ought to issue in what he calls " attendance at a place of worship."

I suppose there is no doubt that the clergy have lost the true sense of proportion. Not positively.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of the worship of God in a positive direction. If it be granted that the thing is possible and that the Church of England does offer facilities for its performance, then its importance and solemnity cannot be over-estimated. But negatively and comparatively no doubt we are wrong. We fail to insist duly on the importance of other things. However, if we could correct that, we should still be right to insist on the meaning of the church bell.

Putting aside the small number of clergy who are in the happy (and rather perilous) position of merely having to give out notices, to say, for instance, "Next Tuesday being the Feast of S. Dominic, there will be an additional celebration at 5.30 and Solemn Evensong at 8," and the people listen and make mental notes and strenuous resolutions — putting them aside, those of us who are in working-class parishes, as the majority of us are, generally find that we have to do a great deal of hammering, before some of the nuts slip into their positions. Is this right? I think it is, for several reasons.

1. The working-man, at all events, expects it. He does not get it nearly as often as he expects it, but it is right often to approach him on his vulnerable side.

2. Church-going is a means to the end. Or, to begin farther back and to make the statement more sweeping, to have relations with the parson is often the only means to the end. It is not pride, but observation which tells us that if many a working-man is ever going to get religion, it will be through

us or one of our helpers. We are not proud of it. We are not glad of it. It fills us with a sense of our inadequacy. It is at best a dim and fantastic hope. But we know that unless in Divine despair God kills his child, and perhaps not even then, we and our words and work represent roughly the only means of access to his soul. Therefore, like the legendary child who saved a country-side by putting his finger in the hole in the dyke, we put our finger in. There seems nothing else to do. No one finger is worth much, and ours are not particularly good fingers, and the hole is much too large for us to fill, but *que voulez vous?* We try to keep in touch with people. Sometimes it comes off. Almost always it comes off better than we know or deserve. Generally, it is more promising than the attempt of the well-meaning layman, because we know our business better, and we know our men.[1] Sometimes, when it seems least

[1] The witness of the layman is, of course, indispensable, and the fact of it is immeasurably more valuable than the fact of ours, because it is non-professional. But the intrinsic quality of our witness and persuasion is likely to be better, because we are expert. It is our business to understand the layman. It is perfectly true that it is a very difficult business and we often mismanage it. We fall into the error of supposing that the layman can be expected to look at things from our point of view, which is impossible and undesirable. There is a very illuminating contribution to the study of the whole question of the relations of clergy and laity by the Rev. H. H. Kelly, S.S.M. in vol. iv. of the *Pan-Anglican Report*, p. 40 *sqq*. Much of what Father Kelly says, both there and elsewhere, appears to me entirely unanswerable. It goes to the root of the matter, it staggers the conventional reader and smites him with the sense of its truth. It is not possible here to discuss the whole subject, but if Father Kelly's arguments come to be generally accepted,

likely, it is really on the point of complete success. We say "Come and see." We unblushingly invite people to the Harvest Festival. We don't *say* "Come and look at the pumpkins." We know this will be the motive in some cases. But we also know that the Church has tricks up her sleeve. As a sailor-man once said, "The Almighty is so wily."[1] Perhaps the service, and the hymn, and the sermon, and the inexplicable but undoubted stimulus of an uncomfortably crowded church will quicken and fructify the vague belief in the source of daily bread or in its possible consecration. To go to church may put someone in touch with us, and so with God. When an experienced Missioner is talking to working-boys who want to "make a resolution," they always want to resolve "to chuck swearing." He always persuades them to join a Confirmation-class. By this he ensures that they at all events begin to approach Confirmation, which is the power of God.

there will be a complete readjustment of the place which the Universities and Theological Colleges hold in the education of the clergy. These are great questions, and they lie beyond my present purpose, which is merely to analyse the existing state of things. But I will just add this. Educationally, the Theological Colleges are coping with a task of extraordinary difficulty. But the spiritual debt which the Church of England owes to them is enormous. They, and almost they alone, save the Church from an half-converted ministry. They are loved by all who know them. They are disliked by those only who are ignorant of their work. Young men learn within their walls two lessons, (1) that prayer is an intense reality, and (2) that Christians are brothers.

[1] The expression is really Newman's—

"Wiling me year by year, till I am found
A pilgrim pale, with Paul's sad girdle bound."

He also ensures that they are brought into touch with the whole of religion. And, incidentally, the cessation, or, at all events, a reasonable diminution of their swearing habits is ensured, as it never could have been in their own way. There may be some clergy who enjoy saying "Come and hear me preach next Sunday." Every profession has its black sheep. But if a man thoroughly dislikes it and yet occasionally brings himself to say it, he is sacrificing his reputation and risking his self-respect for the sake of Christ and the souls who should be His. He is the last word in heroism. He dares to be "a fool for Christ's sake." "Blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy Book, which Thou hast written." "I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake." Apart from them he will not be saved. He is become all things to all men, that he may by all means save some. To the vulgar he became as vulgar (not being himself vulgar, but a priest and a Master of Arts) that he might save them that were vulgar.

3. Worship is an end in itself. To a certain extent the element of advantage in common worship, which is not secured even by the most devout private prayer, is admitted, and as far as the Sacraments are concerned (as a rule it is not nearly far enough), the principle is recognized that if you wish to have a Sacrament you must go to church and fetch it. But the number of people in the Church of England who know as a general, abstract, truth that worship is an end in itself is extraordinarily small. But our Lord knew it when He said, "Let

her alone; she hath wrought a good work on me." The Jews knew it. The Church knows it, and the Church of England knows it. Roman Catholics know it. But many Churchmen will not believe it. They insist on thinking that they go to church to get good or hear sermons. They do sometimes actually go to church in order to please the parson, or to satisfy their wives or to edify their children, or because it is Sunday, or because you have to in the country. This is not blasphemy, nor is it altogether a convention. Somewhere at the back of their minds they have a conviction that they ought to go. This duty, realized so dimly and sub-consciously, is the duty of worship for its own sake. For its own sake.

"Who chooseth this, must give and hazard all he hath."

There should be, strictly speaking (so strictly that no one can perfectly fulfil the test), no ulterior aim whatever. There are plenty of ulterior results. It brings many blessings in its train. They *do* hear sermons and get good. They *do* please the parson, satisfy their wives, and edify their children. It *is* Sunday, and church-going *is* important in the country. All this is true, but the object with which men should go to church is to devote themselves to God, to offer Him their confession, their petition, their thanksgiving, and their praise. These four actions demand and exercise four of the noblest faculties of human nature, a brave humility, a determination which is not lawless, personal gratitude, and an uplifting selflessness. Truly, it is not surprising that some who have

utterly rejected all theology should nevertheless have perceived the necessity of worship. When it is added that Christian worship is the worship of God through Christ, and that the Church of England has stoutly resisted the considerable attractions of a mumbled magic on the one hand and ecstatic groans and Hallelujahs on the other, it will be seen that the ideal of worship of the Church of England, difficult and exacting as it may be, is nevertheless a glorious thing.

CHAPTER XIV

IN CHURCH

I SPOKE in the last chapter of the Church of England resisting counter-attractions.

These counter-attractions need a word of explanation. Roman Catholics act constantly upon their conviction of the truth that worship is the important thing. They bear with a certain amount of temporary idolatry; they do not expect every soul to be always at its best; they know that some souls never can do very much.[1] They believe in not quenching the smoking flax. In fact they encourage the kindling of penny candles. All this is sound psychology. There is much more science in their gaudy images and their paper flowers than is commonly supposed. Some persons in the Church of England are disposed to imitate this. Now it is notorious that we need more of the element of mystery in our worship. But if any English parson, with the laudable intention of producing this, surrounds the Eucharist with the atmosphere of magic rather than of mystery, makes the Prayer of Consecration inaudible, and encourages people as a rule not to follow the service but to pray their own

[1] See note on p. 169.

prayers or to sing hymns all the time, he is choosing a path of greater ease and more immediate efficiency, but less educative, and ultimately less edifying and less pleasing to God. To help a congregation of uneducated English people to join intelligently in the Eucharist is one of the most difficult things in the world. It is also one of the most useful. I happen myself to believe that this particular task is both possible and right, and I am delighted to observe from the Book of Common Prayer, that the Church of England appears, at least since the Reformation, to be pledged to carry it out.

On the other hand I am sure it must be an immense relief to be able to shout out something in the middle of the service. We clergy have our opportunity in the sermon. The Churchwardens can relieve their feelings by Churchwarding; the sidesmen sidle, and the vergers verge. But the congregation, already deafened by the anthem, have unfortunately become dumb and paralyzed as well. No doubt the gradual ousting of convention from pulpit and pew will do much to make our worship freer and more natural. Catechizing by competent catechists will help in this. There are already signs of the return of wholesome laughter to the Church. Perhaps the Church of England is still too intellectual—not vulgar enough, not sentimental enough—but there is no doubt that we are pledged to decency and the use of reason in our worship.

We are between two extremes. The *Via media*

as such is horrible. A mechanically-drawn line, equidistant from two vigorous outlying boundaries, is a miserable thing. But if it were possible for us to reach out in two directions and gather all that is good in both, why then we should be following S. Paul's counsel to the intellectual, artistic, but unruly and imperfectly Christianized Corinthians, "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also."

But alas! very few churchmen have ever seen the worship of the Church of England. What they have seen (or rather, heard, because ever since the Reformation the eyes of the people have been sealed and the main avenue of approach to the mind within has been the ear) is Matins, if they are rich, and Evensong, if they are poor. Now the moment anyone says this, there is always someone who replies, "Ah, you are disparaging the beautiful morning service of the Church of England." This is unfair, for three reasons. First, I am not disparaging it. Secondly, I am likely to have a clearer and higher estimate of its beauty than persons who are not in the habit of saying it, either publicly or privately, every day. And thirdly, it is not the Sunday morning service either of the Church or of the Church of England. England will not be Christian until the Church of England returns to its own ideal, as set forth in the Prayer-book, to the Apostolic ideal, to the Dominical ideal, of making the breaking of the Bread the principal Sunday Service.

What people call the beautiful morning service

of the Church of England, and some even call the regular Church service, is extremely beautiful—so beautiful that it requires a trained appreciation: extremely morning—so morning that it is ridiculous to say it at mid-day: extremely regular—so regular that it ought to be said seven times a week. It is also extremely difficult to understand: the rapid turns from Psalm to Lesson, and from Lesson to Te Deum, the enormous amount of previous knowledge required before it can become intelligible: the extent of background that has to be supplied: the reckless illogicality involved in pretending that a subsidiary devotion is really principal, in elevating what is after all an underplot in the drama of worship into the main and only theme, all these things combine to make Matins, as now sung in far too many English churches, an unreal, unedifying, unstrengthening, unconsoling, unworshipful affair. It is only saved from being much worse, because God is good and the people are good too. Many of them are, as a matter of fact, communicants, and many of them are extraordinarily devout. A stiff bracing of the conscience and the concentration of a powerful and educated will can suck no small advantage even out of Matins. Many of the clergy, especially those who may still be called Tractarians, clergy of the cultured, devout Cathedral type, are deceived by their own Christian humility in this matter. They do not realize that what is possible for them is not possible for Mrs. Jones. If they object that it will become possible for Mrs. Jones by the grace of God, I reply that Mrs. Jones will

find much more of that in circulation at the Lord's Supper than at Matins. It is probable enough that Mrs. Jones herself prefers Matins or (if she does not keep a cook but is one) Evensong. But Mrs. Jones does not know what is good for her. Some of us know Mrs. Jones very well indeed. We have talked to her again and again about this. She has listened, good soul that she is, and she is coming round. She is beginning to believe that if she is a Christian, Christ's service is her duty on Christ's day.

After all, that is the only point. Those individuals who knowingly break away from the custom of united and historic Christendom, and substitute English Matins for the Catholic Eucharist, have broken away from Christ. Those incumbents, or Church Councils, or bodies of lay opinion who either provide or emphasize or frequent Matins to the disparagement or overshadowing of the Lord's Supper should very seriously consider that, as Mr. Marson puts it in his startling way, "Our Lord did not say 'Suffer the little children to come unto Matins.'" Of course, there are grave practical difficulties in many parishes. I recognize that it is one thing for a parson to gather a few people to the Eucharist where there have been none at all before, and quite another to inherit a large congregation thoroughly accustomed to Sunday Matins at eleven. Then, many Churchmen sincerely object to non-communicating attendance. And since, rightly or wrongly, the majority of lay-people do not, and for the present will not, communicate every Sunday, an increase in this practice will follow as a certain consequence,

wherever the Eucharist is made the principal Sunday service. I do not myself consider that the disadvantages of frequent non-communicating attendance are so great as the disadvantages of always relegating the Lord's Supper to a secondary place. But time and teaching will eventually solve the problem.

I am not much impressed with the argument that of course the early Eucharist is really the chief service of the day. Experience shows that English people rarely take any notice of what you say ; they only listen to what you do. Therefore you must do what the Lord said you were to do in remembrance of Him. And you must do it at what people still insist on considering the principal occasion. Eleven o'clock is far from the ideal hour. Most of us would prefer nine or half-past nine. But we are the servants of the public, with the double duty of taking the ground they give us and building on it for the honour and glory of the Lord. Things will in course of time adjust themselves. When the Church of England has really discovered what the Eucharist is, the Church of England will probably insist on having it at an hour when large numbers can communicate before their breakfast. And even now there need never be any difficulty about obeying the rubrics of the Prayer Book.

The afternoon of Sunday is devoted to the teaching of the young. Unfortunately, it is sometimes devoted to teaching them, under conditions of contemptible disorder, the probable route of

the children of Israel through the wilderness. But whether it is done by Sunday School or by the Prayer Book method of Catechizing, there is only one thing worth doing for children on Sunday afternoon, and that is to teach them religion. The necessary condition is a religious, that is, an interesting and devotional atmosphere. The subject of instruction is the Christian religion, as contained in the Church Catechism. The syllabus is as follows—The Covenant, or What God has done for you already, The Creed, or What you are to Believe, The Duties, or What you are to do, Prayer, or How you approach God, The Sacraments, or How God approaches you. The children are there in order that they may be taught to love God, to say their prayers, to worship, and to be good, obedient, truthful, brave, gentle and considerate. But in half the Sunday Schools in England they are being taught the life of Solomon, and the Missionary Journeys of S. Paul.[1]

The later hours of Sunday afternoon are often devoted to a service for men only. Sometimes a startling title is advertised, like "Humming-birds" or "Upside Down" or "Did man ever have a tail?" I am by no means opposed to startling titles. It is a Christian and even a divine thing to be surprising and sensational. Nor do I object to the jolly laughter which is often heard at such services. But I am not much impressed by the

[1] No one can touch the subject of the waste of English religious teaching without a grateful reference to Mr. C. L. Marson's admirable *Huppim and Muppim* (A. R. Mowbray. 1*d*.).

mere numbers who attend them. A more modest but more solid thing is a discussion, assisted by tobacco, in the parish room, with an occasional men's service just to show them where the Church is and what hymns can be.

The problem of the Evening Service is more simple. Evensong holds the field, practically unchallenged except on the occasional occurrence of "Gebal and Ammon and Amalek: the Philistines with them that dwell at Tyre." And probably for life-long Church of England people Evensong is much the best Sunday evening service. Better than Compline, better than a non-liturgical service. But in all parishes it ought to have a sequel, and in some it ought merely to precede the Mission Service. This has to be very simple and easy to understand, with a certain amount of sentimental ranting, a certain amount of stern rebuke, a large amount of friendly encouragement, and some instruction. Mission hymns, not even excluding the riotous debauch of sentiment involved in both words and tunes of "Where is my wandering boy to-night?" or "God be with you till we meet again,"[1] must form an essential element in the psalmody of Mission Services. A friendly, but not very well-informed parishioner said to a parson the other day, "If anyone came to our Church in the morning he would think it was Roman Catholic, and if he came in the evening he would think it was Salvation Army." The criticism was

[1] But not "Glory for me." It clashes too stridently with "Our Father."

not really accurate; no one who understood the matter, who knew the methods of Rome or General Booth, could possibly make either of these mistakes. But the parson was sincerely grateful for the compliment.

The day of the cinematograph has come, but the day of the lantern is not over yet. There is a homely ritualism about lantern services which appeals to many people. We trust too much to talking. The Gospel is not only good news from a far country. It is Health and Salvation, first of all dawning on the horizon, then coming nearer and nearer, until it is seen close at hand, the Son of Man among the sons of men, going about doing good. The principle of lantern services is the principle of ritualism, and not altogether unlike the principle of the very Sacraments themselves.

But I am afraid all this talk about mission services comes too late. There are some people who will never believe that a priest can be evangelical or that a parson can ever take a wider view than they do themselves. I am afraid I have damned myself altogether in the eyes of most moderate persons by suggesting that, if ever the people of England, and especially the poor people, are to realize the importance of Sunday or week-day worship it will have to be Eucharistic worship. I have put myself by this admission beyond the pale. And it is hardly an extenuating circumstance that I am versatile (or flippant) enough to disappear from their grave and sober observation in several directions at once. It will be even worse when I go on to approve of

daily services. For daily services are commonly thought to be the last word in professionalism. Not content with Sunday, the insatiable parson causes the bell to be tolled at least twelve times during the week, and expects his parishioners to leave their beds and their tea-tables and come to church. Now, what are the facts? It is the plain duty of the parson to say at least the morning and evening prayers every day. As has been brutally but truly said,[1] it is one of the things he is paid to do. But he is not unreasonable or, if he is, his unreasonableness is very soon crushed out of him by facts. For take what time he will, he finds that the majority of those who worship with him on Sundays are prevented from being present on week-days. Yet it is possible to create a demand for daily worship: it is possible by slow degrees to bring about an appreciable use of what is provided, a state of things in which people welcome opportunities of marking a domestic anniversary, or arming themselves for a day of difficult duty, by going to Holy Communion in the morning; in which other people, who are working in factories, or eating or preparing breakfast, realize that prayers are being said for them.

The great difficulty about spiritual work in the vast majority of parishes is that it all seems so remote from people's lives. Confirmation is an alien thing to most of the parishioners. It is not that God the Holy Ghost cannot strengthen characters. It is not that their characters do not want strengthening.

[1] By Dr. Dearmer in the *Parson's Handbook*, p. 228 (4th ed.).

It is only that Confirmation does not now seem a natural way of meeting an admitted need. Holy Communion is a remote and almost dreaded thing. It is believed in with an intensity that is surprising. "Oh no, I could never take the Communion. I'm not good enough." It is not that the idea of spiritually feeding on consecrated bread is in itself difficult or repulsive: it is easy and attractive. But it has been allowed to become so remote, that it is thought of as no doubt very attractive—for somebody else. Something has happened. It may be that the Reformation is to blame, or the hardening of industrial conditions, or the undenominational education given in all but very few of English Schools, or it may be from some other cause or causes. But a very serious and searching remedy is required. A great change must come over the spirit of English life before it can be, or can once again become, religious.

And yet it sometimes seems that the change required is small. Surely it is not unnatural to expect that English people will presently learn once more to consecrate their ambitions and their failures, their work and weaknesses, their regrets and hopes and fears to the God Who made them in the Church of the Carpenter of Nazareth. We may be wrong, we clergy, in thinking that our day is at hand. Father Benson's *The Lord of the World* may be nearer to the truth than his *The Dawn of All*. But when we see the cultured classes go a-whoring after new religions, and the uneducated repeating their formulæ like "Mustn't grumble," "I suppose we're all going the same way," "There's a better world than this to

come," and others, with such simple faith, it is borne in upon us that we shall soon be able to show the cultured that the old religion can still satisfy, and instil a few of the right formulæ into the patient poor. We look up, and lift up our heads: for the time of redemption draweth nigh.

The Reformation, which was intended to lead to more frequent Communion and more intelligent worship, has very largely failed of both these objects. The hard conditions of modern industrial life make the struggle for existence so pressing, that it is difficult both for those who have plenty and those who have not enough, to remember that man does not live by bread alone. The satisfaction of being comfortable and the dissatisfaction of being uncomfortable are alike absorbing. Finally, the kind of education, which we nearly all receive at school, suggests that religion is a thing of facts and dates and lists, a thing from which it is good to become emancipated as soon as school days are over. There is too little sense of membership or loyalty to Christ.

So there it is. Of course, it is possible to say that the parson has his cut-and-dried system which fails to meet the situation. The system is wrong, and it is useless for him to scold the people because they will not be confirmed or come to church. Now, a clerical scold is a nasty weed; the result of intellectual conviction planted in thin spiritual soil. But there certainly must be conviction; a benevolent and constitutional monarchy is the most satisfactory and most Christian form of parochial or diocesan government; and the bearing of the priest ought to

contain more sternness than it generally does. He ought to be a person who inspires and consecrates rather than one who merely smiles and shakes hands. And as for the system, if the Gospel is true, the system cannot be far wrong. It covers all the ground, and it lasts all the time. Every spot is in a parish, and the ministrations of the Church are suited to every period of life.

CHAPTER XV

PRIESTCRAFT

THE problem is partly moral. It is not the case that the majority of our parishioners are wicked: in a great many ways they are extraordinarily good. The patience with which they bear the burdens of civilization is amazing. But all the same the problem is partly one of character. Love of a high ideal, willing acceptance of non-legal discipline, humility and perseverance are qualities which must be developed before England can become Christian. Of course it is very hard to say whether any given individual or parish or nation has really been evangelized, but to be evangelized and not converted implies a fault of character. For instance, the observance of Lent is a thing honestly detested by some people, but it is really wicked never to deny yourself at all. The root of disinclination to go to Church and of denunciation of auricular confession is sometimes pride. There is such a thing as clerical tyranny, which must be resisted, but when the sidesman not only resigns his position but also ceases to be a communicant because some one else was asked to audit the accounts, the quality of his perseverance and the motive of his assistance hitherto are clearly bad.

The parson, like S. John Baptist, has to make for righteousness and to rebuke faults. It puts him on his own honour. It makes him desperately ashamed. It sends him to his own confession, or the equivalent. But he must do it all the same. When he is very young the parson, because he is young and foolish, says, "*You* must keep God's commandments." This, said like that, will never do. Very soon, as he goes about his parish and sees what his people are like, he begins to say, "*We* must do our duty." This is true enough, but it does not grip and arrest; it does not move or convert. So, as time goes on, and the parson becomes old and wise and humble, he says fearlessly, "*You* must love Jesus more," because he knows now that that is what the people really want.

But the problem is partly of a different kind. Not intellectual, but rather educational. There is no reason to suppose that the Tiroler is more intellectual than the London working man. Certainly it is difficult to think that the staff of the Austrian village schools is more efficient intellectually than the bright young teachers of the London Day-schools, who are so keen and vigorous and scientific, and yet miss the mark. It is not their fault: they compete untiringly and with miraculous success against impossible conditions. They are not to be blamed any more than the clergy are to be blamed: in fact, much less, because if it be granted (as of course it must not really be) that the schoolmaster is only a teacher, they are, man for man, much more efficient at their work than the clergy are at theirs.

But, in spite of this, the problem is educational. The Tiroler is from the dawn of consciousness to the hour of death a member of the beloved church. The young Londoner merely attends school five days a week and Sunday school one day a fortnight up to the age of fourteen, and then leaves. At the age of twenty-five he has reached the following convictions :—

(1) Religion consists of Scripture, and is a thing which you had to learn at school.

(2) The clergy are paid by the State.

(3) Most of the people who go to Church are either rich or on the make.

(4) Some of them, however, are really religious. Real religion is to be respected, but at the same time rigorously tested by means of "chipping," in order to see if its professors can be goaded into swearing or other inconsistent conduct.

(5) Others are not really religious, but apparently they either find church-going as good a way as any of passing an hour, or wish to pay their respects to the clergyman rather frequently.

(6) As a matter of personal comfort and convenience, it is a mistake to commit yourself to anything beyond a "Watch-night Service."

(7) Jesus Christ came into the world to "save our sins."

(8) There is no difference between Church and Chapel.

(9) All persons, at death, go straight to heaven.

The following dialogue, which is not actual, but characteristic, illustrates sufficiently the parson's

methods and the parson's difficulties. The scene is the doorstep of a house in a poor part of London.[1]

MR. BULL (*with gruff courtesy*). "Ah, it's the missis you want."

P. "On the contrary, Mr. Bull, I want you."

MR. B. "I'm not religious."

P. "At all events you are not a bachelor. Do you mind telling me where you were married?"

MR. B. "Well, I'm blowed. Round at S. Mary's."

P. (*with interest*). "I thought very likely it was there. And" (*blandly*) "have you ever been there since?"

MR. B. (*after a pause*). "Well, I think I went with the missis when young Bill was christened, and perhaps one or two of the others, but I haven't been for a decent while."

P. "Then you were religious once, anyhow, Mr. Bull."

MR. B. "Well, I'm not against religion, not in any shape and form. But I never took up with Church or anything of that. I think there's some that go to church that are no better than those that don't."

P. (*heartily*). "Yes, indeed, Mr. Bull. You really ought to come some time and hear us say the General Confession. Your worst fears would be confirmed."

[1] This, and some more like it, first appeared in a magazine called *The Battersea Caian*. But the idea came from a series of papers which the Rev. L. A. Phillips, sometime Rector of Sibstone, printed in his Parish Magazine some years ago.

MR. B. "Confirmed. No, I don't hold with that. I don't think any one ought to set themselves to be better than their neighbours."

P. "No, indeed, I quite agree with you. But I suppose it wouldn't be a bad thing if we could be made a bit better than we are."

MR. B. (*hotly*). "Well, I'm sure there's a good many much worse than I am."

P. "Mr. Bull, Mr. Bull, Mr. Bull, I thought you didn't hold with setting up to be better than your neighbours."

MR. B. "You don't half take a chap up. I'm an honest man, and a Church of England man, but I won't make any professions till I'm quite sure that I can act up to them. I like to see my way."

P. "Mr. Bull, I think you said you were a married man. How did you know that you would always keep on being fond of the missis?"

MR. B. (*perceiving whither this line of argument is leading*). "Well, I'm a decent father, anyhow."

P. "Exactly. Mr. Bull, what a funny thing it would be if you said, 'I love my children, but of course I never speak to them or do anything for them, or expect them to do anything for me.'"

MR. B. "Ah, but that's not me. When I say a thing, I mean it."

P. "Mr. Bull, do you believe in God?"

The parson exists to remind people of eternal and universal things. It makes no difference whether he likes to describe himself by one of the

current names or by another. He is first and foremost a Catholic minister of the Universal Church and the eternal Gospel. Admitted by laying-on of hands to the Catholic ministry by a Bishop of the Catholic Church, he is only afterwards licensed to an English parish and pledged to conduct public worship according to the Book of Common Prayer. Of course, the baptized laymen with whom he deals on doorsteps or elsewhere are Catholic Christians too, but many of them have lost their pass-books and never draw upon their account at the Bank of Grace. He is their man of spiritual business; he has to exhort them, and so much the more as he sees the Quarter-day approaching; he has to supply them with the forms and means of drawing benefits; he warns them of the importance of making provision for death and after death; sometimes regretfully he indicates the sad necessity for filing a petition. He enters the sphere of their personal affairs and fortunes from a larger world. He is acquainted with the law. He knows how Justice has to be approached. He can explain where and how they have to sign their names and declare this as their act and deed. He does not do their business for them; he only arranges it so that they can best do it for themselves. He did not himself invent *Habeas Corpus*, or Return of Income-Tax, or Trial by Jury. He only suggests how they can claim that which is their privilege as citizens; he shews them how justice can be had.

And if the parson visiting can thus be compared to the family solicitor, the parson preaching and the

parson praying is the counsel for the defence. As a wise counsel, before the day of trial, he suggests the best method of composition out of court, or the best plea to enter; as a rule he counsels full confession, a plea of guilty, with an appeal to mercy. Such are the parson's sermons: his advice to sinners how to bear themselves before the outraged Majesty of God. And his intercession is his speech for the defence. His Eucharist, his Litany, his secret prayers, are his human and impassioned pleadings at the bar of Heaven. For the parson is one who bears the people on his heart: in his sympathy for their troubles, in his rejoicing with their happiness, in his plans for their welfare, in his prayers for their salvation, he is their ambassador, their advocate, their priest. The true shepherd loves his sheep, and because Love is Divine, and Love is Sacrifice, the best prayers of a loving shepherd are not proud, or selfish, or parochial, or Pharisaical: they are the prayers of one who is at once a father and a brother and a child.

And that is why he can never quite despair. His work is a grim struggle. He is battling against the results of centuries of stubbornness and generations of neglect. He is no all-conquering paladin, no invulnerable Achilles. The sword of Michael is often too heavy for his hands to wield with either efficiency or ease. He tries to stand, if need be, *contra mundum*, but he is not an Athanasius. The instability of the half-converted and the blank resistance of the indifferent sometimes go near to break his heart. He has enough divinity to bear

with failure, but enough human nature not to like it. But just because prayer is his business, just because he can always kneel down and commit his failures and his hopes and plans to Other Hands, he is able to maintain what is often thought to be a strange and fatuous cheerfulness; he can never quite despair.

And, finally, the parson is a judge. In ancient times the father of a family combined in his own person the offices of ruler, priest and judge. The Church is conservative with the wise conservatism which proves all things and holds fast that which is good. And the parson in modern England is still what the primitive father used to be. He is the father of his little flock. The Bishop has summoned him to be no longer a private member of the Church but to enter

> "Other realms of love;
>
> "His office there to rear, to teach;
> Becoming, as is meet and fit,
> A link among the days, to knit
> The generations each to each."

And as the father of his flock, he rules them. He exercises godly discipline on those who will receive it. As priest, he bears them on his heart and ministers to them holy things. As judge he determines (at least, in theory) who shall be fed and who shall fast; whose sins shall be forgiven and whose retained. There is no compelling power behind him; judicial decisions in his court are not enforced by the strong arm of the executive; the voice of Jesus

speaking through his unworthy and yet consecrated lips is heard by no other ear than that of the repentant saint. There is no crowded audience ; no press-report, no warders, no visible effect of the decision, no cheering multitudes or disappointed friends, no physical imprisonment or liberty, no claim of the absolver to personal fitness or worthiness, or superhuman and unsinful status. An intellectual person once questioned the merits of a much-loved preacher. "Why do they crowd to hear him—there's nothing in his sermons." And the answer was, "No, nothing—except the Holy Ghost." So might it always be with the parson and his work.

> "Look not to me—no grace is mine ;
> But I can lift the Mercy-sign !
> This would'st thou ? Let it be !
> Kneel down, and take the word divine,
> ABSOLVO TE."

But I do not want to end on a point which will be questioned by many and denied by some. The power of the keys is assumed in the words of Ordination, and it is only practised on those who humbly and heartily desire it. But even if it were humbly and heartily desired by every sinner, there is one still more Catholic and Universal thing, a thing not limited to one parish or one world, a thing which is eternal. Whether there be sermons, they shall be done away ; whether there be Sacraments they shall find fulfilment and shall cease ; whether there be absolutions, they shall be done away. For sinners preach to sinners, and sinful men are absolved by sinful priests. The humble knees and the

faithful hands stretched out and the bread and wine do not endure. This body is for the moment, and sin is a temporary trespasser, an alien thing, a devil's bailiff in partial possession for a little while. When that which is perfect is come, Sacraments and absolutions shall be done away. But love never faileth. It belongs to this world and the world which is to come. And the priest, the man to whom so much is given, of whom so much shall be and is required, is constrained by the love of Christ to love the brethren. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, and maketh us glad with the joy of His countenance, that we may be able to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep, to feed the hungry and to love the brethren, with the same love and comfort wherewith we ourselves are loved and comforted of God. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life, that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Come, ye children, and hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. O hear ye this, all ye people: ponder it with your ears, all ye that dwell in the world: high and low, rich and poor: one with another. O taste, and see, how gracious the Lord

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is: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye that are His saints: for they that fear Him lack nothing. The lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they who seek after the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.

The long line of those who have sought after the Lord for the sake of other souls besides their own includes the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs. These are the heroes and great saints of faith, the King's bodyguard, the Household Cavalry. They ride upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And at the end of all this holy pomp there shambles an ungainly multitude of plain, black-coated men, an inglorious company, an unprophetic fellowship, an ignoble army. Frail, fatuous, forlorn, they are yet not altogether without form and order and inspiration; they own the same allegiance: they are adventuring the same campaign, and the banner even over them is love. They hold in honest hands the crook of Peter. And of some of them it shall perhaps be said, "Their sins, which are many, are forgiven; for they loved much."

From all blindness of heart; from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred, and malice; and all uncharitableness, *Good Lord, deliver us.*

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